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EARINGS LOSS? by Rich Lowry

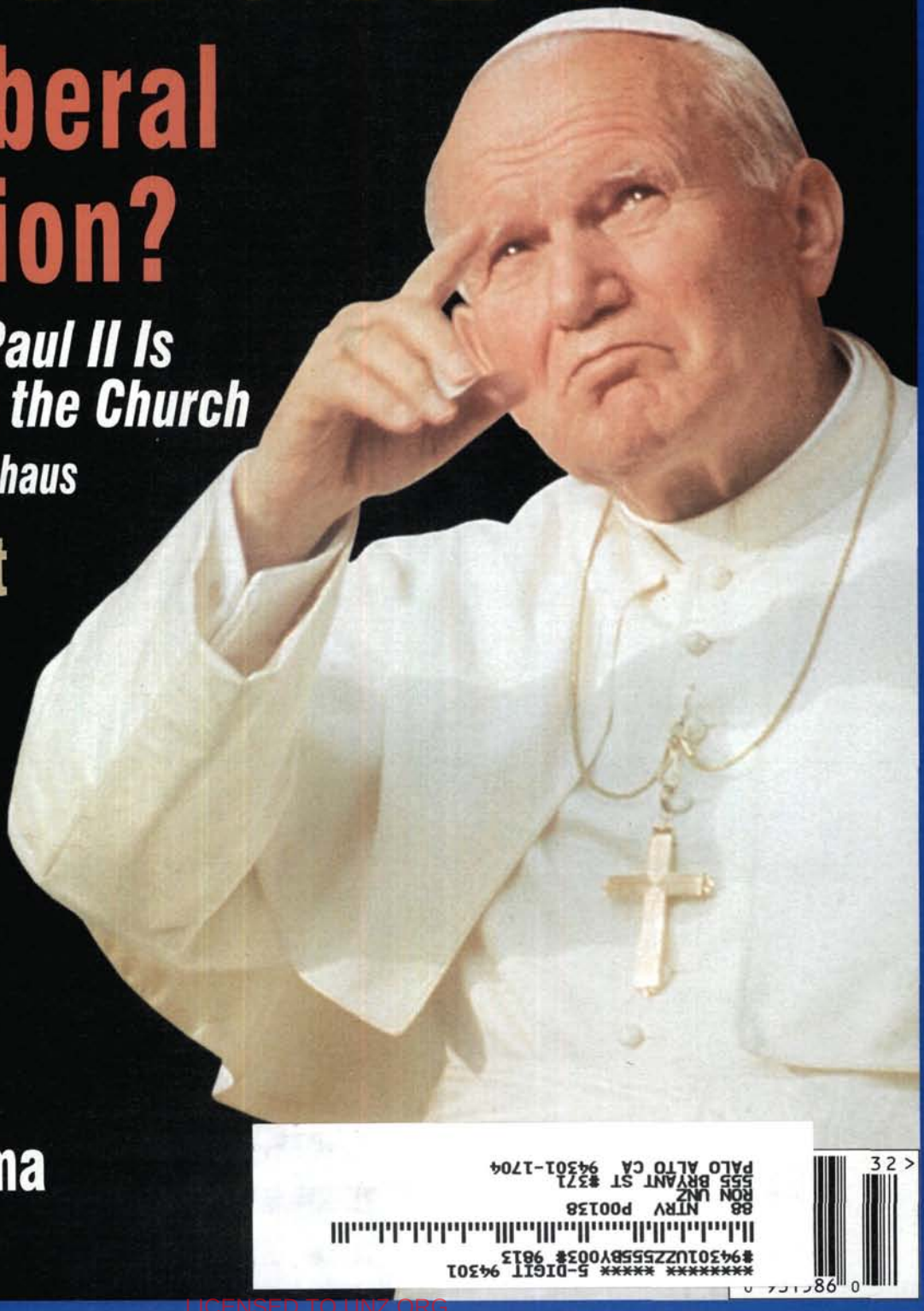
James Stewart's Fear of Flying, by Mark Steyn

NATIONAL REVIEW

In a Liberal Direction?

Where John Paul II Is Really Taking the Church

Richard John Neuhaus



Government Makes Us Sick—Seriously

Jacob Sullum

America's Quebec? The Puerto Rican Dilemma

Jorge Amselle

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THE UNTOUCHABLES

FEDERALLY-OWNED UTILITIES TELL CONGRESS —"BACK OFF"

Many American conservatives believe that Congress has little if any role to play in bringing the benefits of market competition to electricity consumers. We believe that current state-based reform is the best of all possible developments: competition and consumer choice flourish without a "one size fits all" Washington mandate.

Nevertheless, if Congress is intent on restructuring America's electric utility industry, it must begin with the federally-owned utilities like the Bonneville Power Administration and the Tennessee Valley Authority. To exempt them from this debate makes a farce of the entire national discussion.

Other countries—Argentina, Chile, Great Britain and others—have privatized their government-owned utilities as the first step toward competition. Here in America, these bloated and debt-ridden federal utilities simply lumber haplessly along. If the era of "Big Government" is truly over—then federally-owned utilities must go.

The "Jurassic" federally-owned utilities are genuine museum pieces. They should be at the top of Congress' reform agenda...rather than the top of Congress' untouchables list.

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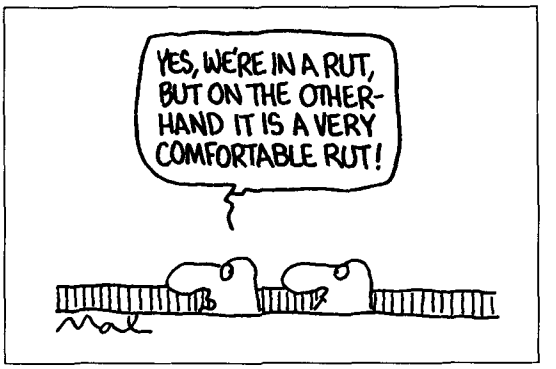
AUGUST 11, 1997 VOL. XLIX, NO. 15



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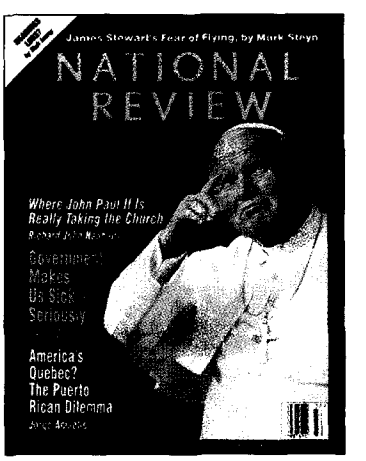

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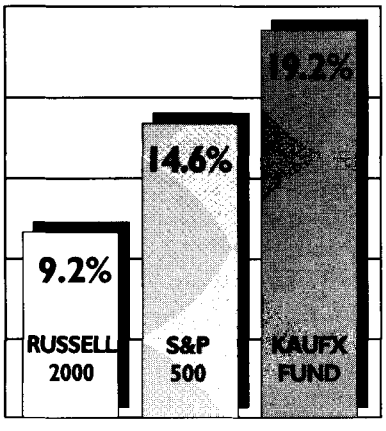

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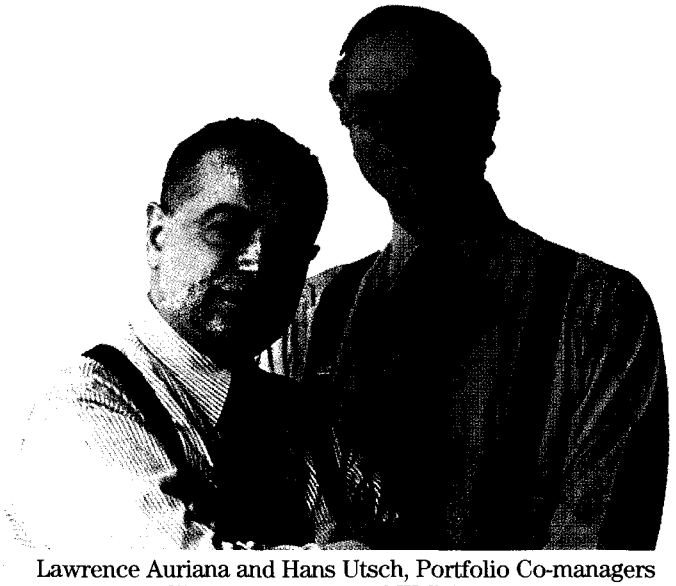

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LETTERS

Looking for Love

Steve Sailer ["Is Love Colorblind?" July 14] tries to explain the obvious and addresses the issue only through Caucasian eyes. I have been a high-school teacher at an integrated site for 27 years and have observed thousands of young men and women go through courting rituals and have come into contact with hundreds of interracial marriages, parents and faculty alike.

From my experience, white women marry black men because they are sick and tired of the sensitive, insecure "new" man. Black men marry white women because it's a ticket out of the ghetto—real, imagined, or metaphorical. (I have also observed that handsome, successful professional black men frequently marry women much less attractive than they are just because they're white.) White men marry Japanese and Korean women because they are even more feminine than *they* are. Japanese and Korean women marry white men because the "new man" will allow them more freedom than the home-grown variety.

Peter Osbaldeston
Los Angeles, Calif.

Black American families are primarily matriarchal. This perpetuates a man's "boy" image. White women are more accepting of a patriarchal relationship, permitting black males to see themselves more as "men." In a society where all blacks have greater equality, black men prefer a stronger position in their personal relationships. Black women seem reluctant to let that happen, and black men associate that with "being kept down." It's cultural, not racial.

Bruce Crawford
Fountain Valley, Calif.

My article on why most interracial couples feature a black husband or an Asian wife has stimulated a wide diversity of interesting responses. At http://members.aol.com/steveslr you can see the best longer ones or submit your own. —SS

George Who?

Peter Brimelow's fear ["Un-American Activities," June 16] that "by 2050, the U.S. will be 'a place that George Washington would not recognize'" may prove mild compared to fear of a place that would not recognize George Washington.

Dominic Portoraro
Toronto, Ont.

Much Ado about Oxford

I enjoyed Joe Sobran's *Alias Shakespeare: Solving the Greatest Literary Mystery of All Time*, but was even more impressed by Jeffrey Hart's hilarious parody of Shakespeare scholarship in his review of the book [June 30]. He managed to incorporate almost every dodge in the traditionalist armamentarium: the easily dismissed time-line "problem"; the classic decoy, where a third of the review deals with the irrelevant topic of schooling in Elizabethan England; and the repeated resort to essential crutches of the traditionalist: "very probably," "there can be little doubt," "seems to have," etc. But he saves the best for last. Shakespeare wrote the plays because, by golly, there is his name right on the cover! Just as George Eliot wrote *Middlemarch* and Anonymous wrote *Primary Colors*. Wonderful work, Professor Hart.

Gregory D. Fink
Haslett, Mich.

Mr. Hart's review is a typical example of the approach of a Stratfordian to any book seeking to link the Earl of Oxford to the plays attributed to William Shakespeare. Discussing William Shaksper's education, he says of the Stratford grammar school that "such" schools had a formidable curriculum in Latin writers. But we do not know what the curriculum was at *that* school, nor is there evidence that Shaksper ever went to it. And in dismissing the case for Oxford by the dating of the plays, one must remember that they may have "appeared" long after they were written.

Mr. Hart dismisses the mystery of authorship by declaring as "fact" that Shaksper wrote the plays. But there is a mystery that Mr. Hart may have an answer for. Why is it that no Elizabethan scholar in America or England has done a full-scale biography of the Earl of Oxford? Why are there no PhD theses about this fascinating, murderous, wealthy, theater-loving, twice-married, play-writing, sophisticated, well-traveled, erudite son-in-law of the great William Cecil? Is academia afraid of the challenge?

Herbert A. Kenny
Manchester, Mass.

I have been called many things in my life, but "Stratfordian" is really the limit. As regards these letters, I will let my review speak for itself, and the letters speak for themselves, especially in point of intellectual manners. —JH

Immigration Victory

Your "Immigration and American Politics" [June 16] is the most complete and incisive discussion of the immigration issue I have seen anywhere. Immigration, especially the illegal kind, is a great political issue for any politician willing to take it on. An obscure congressman for several terms, Elton Gallegly (R., Calif.) took up the immigration issue and suddenly became a celebrity, appearing on news and talk shows throughout his state, even rating a mention by Paul Harvey, a feature on the network evening news, and a major story on *60 Minutes*. On the eve of the 1992 election, the *Washington Post* wrote that Rep. Gallegly was on the list of endangered congressmen up for re-election. But when the returns were in, Gallegly had won a land-slide victory in a district where Clinton had easily trounced Bush. The *Los Angeles Times* (begrudgingly) attributed his victory to his outspokenness on immigration.

James E. Hinish Jr.
Williamsburg, Va.

Giving Manners a Shot

Lewis S. Dabney ["Letters," June 30] apparently feels that anyone who disagrees with him is either too stupid to think for himself, dishonest, or enjoys the suffering of crime victims, and is most certainly a "gun crazy." He accuses Gary Kleck of actually fostering violent crime for some unstated reason, adding, "He's from Florida," as evidence. Mr. Dabney's libelous insults and name calling pretty much guarantee that he will always deal with far more violent people that those of us living out here in "Not-Boston" would normally see. I have spent some time in Boston, and if asked what causes the high level of interpersonal violence, I never would have guessed it was the gun laws in Florida. My guess would have been the level of in-your-face rudeness I found right there in Boston. I'll be damned if I can see how having the Federal Government regulate my life can possibly solve that problem.

Paul Kelly
Boulder, Colo.

Mad Insult

I must protest your July 14 cover. The elephant in stereotypical business attire sends the undeniable message to Animal-Americans that they must wear clothes to fit in. And the mad-scientist pose of Dr. Kevorkian, a man who seeks to extinguish life, is a disgusting insult to Mad Scientist–Americans, who universally seek to create life.

Erik Anderson
San Diego, Calif.

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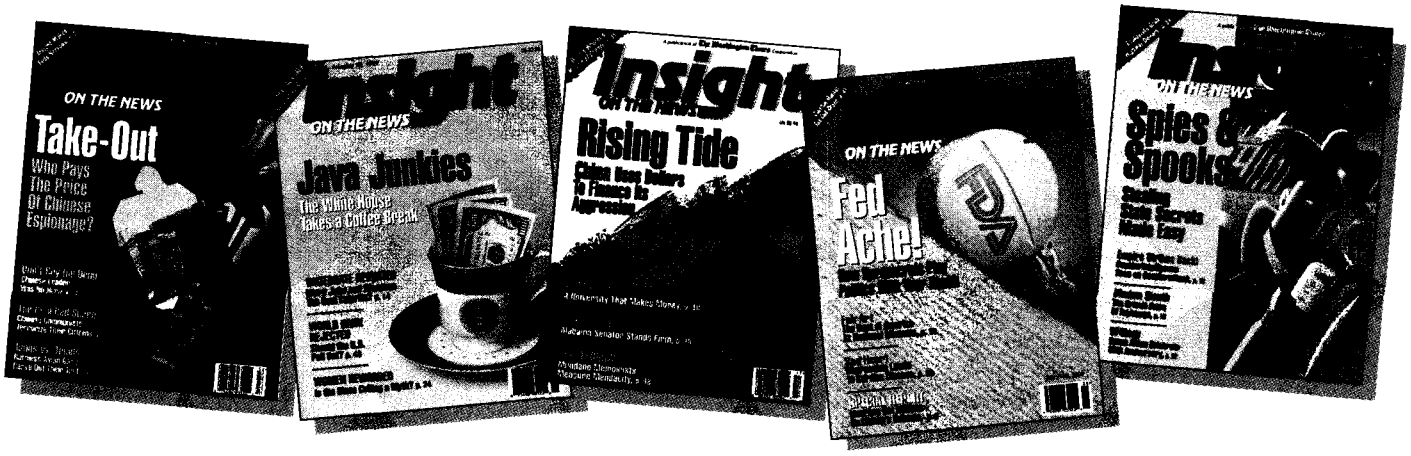

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FROM THE EDITOR

Fitted to Print

■ In general a fortnightly magazine like NATIONAL REVIEW cannot compete with television and newspapers in continuing coverage of major news stories.

Fortunately, there is an exception to this rule, namely news of the Thompson committee hearings on "Asiagate," where Rich Lowry (page 24) is able to scoop the rest of media on stories that have been (technically) on the public record for a week or more. Indeed, the non-treatment of the hearings has been such a shameless case of liberal media bias that even reporters have noticed.

Still, I have to admire a rhetorical device (first coined to dismiss Gennifer Flowers) that committee Democrats, the White House, and the press all employ to gloss over evidence that the Democrats solicited bribes on a grand scale.

It is a two-step device. When the allegation is first made, denounce it as unsubstantiated by any proof. And when proof is eventually provided, scoff that the allegation is "old news."

A possible third step (now being brand-tested against Kenneth Starr) might be to demand that, since no "new" scandals have been proved lately, the hearings should be abandoned.

Mark my words. It will happen.

■ Sean O'Callaghan, a reformed IRA terrorist, offers a uniquely informed analysis of the IRA's latest ceasefire in "The Week." Needless to say, it is far more skeptical of Sinn Fein–IRA's intentions than most of the American media, where euphoria rules. People in Belfast, reveals the *New York Times,* now walk in the park and smell flowers—activities hitherto undreamt of, one gathers.

The same Pollyannish naïveté in the mainstream media greeted the last IRA ceasefire in 1994. *NR*, however, predicted as follows: ". . . the talks will be conducted under the shadow of a threat: namely, that if Sinn Fein–IRA does not achieve its objectives in negotiations, it will resume terrorism. Since those objectives are incompatible with pledges to the Protestants from both governments, that means either the Protestants will be betrayed or the IRA will renew its murder campaign, probably the latter . . . at some point when the pot is nicely boiling, the IRA will denounce British intransigence, withdraw from the talks, and begin bombing and shooting again."

And that is exactly what happened.

I am even less optimistic on this occasion. For the IRA is being admitted into talks while refusing *any* of the concessions—a "permanent" ceasefire; decommissioning of weapons before talks, even *during* talks—that had been demanded along the way as the price of entry. It can negotiate with democratic parties about Northern Ireland's future without surrendering a single gun.

The unionists rightly regard this as a betrayal of pledges to them. So they may well reject talks which, as last time, would be conducted under the shadow of a threat by the IRA to resume terrorism if it did not get its way. If the two governments were then to hold talks with the IRA anyway, loyalist para-military groups (which have kept the 1994 ceasefire until now) would draw the inevitable conclusion that Dublin and London respond only to violence—and resume their own terrorism.

Of course, that might not prevent Bill Clinton or Gerry Adams being awarded a Nobel Prize. My only hope is that they get it jointly.

■ Larry Kudlow sends me a United Airlines menu where "southwestern-style sauteed chicken breast" is described as "highlighting America's multicultural culinary practices." The dish is apparently "accented by a Cilantro Jus . . ."

This is rather like praising a writer as "multilingual" because he occasionally uses phrases like *savoir faire* or *quid pro quo.* But it confirms that "multicultural" is now routinely used as a synonym for "good" or "praiseworthy."

Readers are invited to send in similar usages. The usual bottle of bubbly for the *mot* most *juste*.

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

NATIONAL REVIEW

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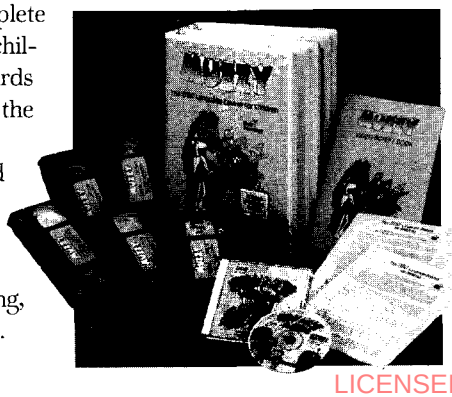

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FOR THE RECORD

■ **Dick Morris** on **John Huang**: "I think he clearly is a Chinese government operative and, if the facts are as indicated, he probably is guilty of espionage or treason." *Washington Post*'s **Howard Kurtz** blasts CNN's non-coverage of Sen. **Fred Thompson**'s Asiagate hearings: "This is a network that covered every minute of the **O. J. Simpson** trial." . . . In CBS News poll, 39 per cent say **Bill Clinton** has same amount of honesty/integrity as other pols; only 23 per cent say he has less; 28 per cent say he has *more*. . . . Heritage Foundation analysts **Ken Weinstein** and **August Stofferahn** report that a quarter of the guests at those White House coffees were federal grantees and contractors, and they account for half the soft money raised. . . . **Julian Bond**, NAACP board member, on Clinton: "On the one hand, he has a stronger commitment to racial justice than any President since **Lyndon Johnson**. But welfare reform was a scandal." . . . Economic forecaster **Kurt Karl** of WEFA, Inc., tells *Washington Post*, "I'm predicting a balanced budget by next year, but only if there's no budget deal. One more year of gridlock and we're home."

■ Wishful thinking: House Minority Leader **Dick Gephardt** tells United Steelworkers, "We can make labor unions have 30 to 40 to 60 per cent of this country's workers again." . . . **Dan Quayle** says his image problems won't hurt much in 2000: "Win a few primaries and the question goes away." He also blasts GOP leaders for compromising too much with Clinton: "Republicans are going to get their ears waxed in 1998 if they don't stand for anything." . . . House Republicans select Reps. **Jennifer Dunn** (Wash.) and **Deborah Pryce** (Ohio) for leadership positions. Both women support legal abortion; Pryce flipped on issue after winning 1992 primary. Other Ohioans in leadership and quasi-leadership positions: Budget Committee Chairman **John Kasich**, Conference Chairman **John Boehner**, Gingrich favorite **Dave Hobson**. . . . Retired Sen. **Alan Simpson** (R., Wyo.) on **Spencer Abraham** (R., Mich.), his successor as chairman of Judiciary Committee's subcommittee on immigration: the reason "we will have about a million immigrants come in here each year, more than we have ever had in our history," is "the simple fact that [Abraham] is of Lebanese-American extraction and he represents the largest group of Lebanese outside of Lebanon."

■ **Newt Gingrich**, reportedly thinking of presidential run, on his conservative critics: "There is a whole narrow bloc, but it is a very important bloc, of activists who grew up in an anti-world. They get up every morning and they want to know who did we punch today, and which arcane philosophical fight were we bold on, and what did we courageously stand up for that was obscure but it was written about in *Human Events* in 1967." . . . "How should my beloved Republican revolution reinvigorate itself?" asks ex-Gingrich spokesman **Tony Blankley** in *George*. "Go read Newt Gingrich's old speeches. Hold public hearings on the state of public education. Deal with race and quotas, crime and punishment, and religion in the public sector. The Republican Party should systemically confront these failures of Enlightenment liberalism with extensive public scrutiny followed by a season of legislation." . . . Conservative crack-up continues: after *Weekly Standard* endorses NATO expansion—a cause *NR* has favored for years—*The American Spectator* makes (on its website) the *Standard*'s anonymous editorialist its "Enemy of the Week," accuses him of "Clinton-like evasiveness, intellectual dishonesty, and public drunkenness," and concludes, "Now if the real point of NATO expansion was to get Israel into the club . . ."

"Your proposal to change the federal guidelines doesn't meet the guidelines for federal guideline changes."

■ Eco-totalitarianism in one city: *San Francisco Chronicle* reports that city is likely to pass new environmental rules: a 150-page "Sustainability Plan," whose provisions include mandating fruit trees in every yard, creating auto-free zones, ending free parking for workers, discouraging cologne and perfume, rounding up stray cats. And for good measure, "more sex-education programs for youths, urging markets to carry organic food, tightening gun control, banning cigarettes in bars, and adding gardening to school activities." On mass transit, SF environmental director **Beryl Magilavy** tells AP, "Compared to Los Angeles we're fantastic. Compared to Copenhagen we've got a long way to go. One of the problems we have in the country is that we focus on what's happening here instead of focusing on the planet." . . . *City Journal*'s **William J. Stern** on **George Pataki's** failure to eliminate rent control in New York City: "Pataki is a 9-to-5 governor, averse to the long hours and political singlemindedness necessary to bring about true change in New York. . . . Now the cause is dead for a decade, and the state's Republican officials stand revealed as business-as-usual apparatchiks of the welfare-state status quo."

■ If you buy *Playboy* for the articles, in July issue you'll read *ER* star **Anthony Edwards** blast a hit movie from his past, *Top Gun*: "People love that big, romantic, wonderful movie about planes and flying and all that crap. I thought it was jingoistic. . . . I guess I'm just an old peacenik, but I don't believe in killing people. I'm wary of simple black-and-white answers because that's the way to fascism, and I don't believe in war. Everything I do creatively these days should be a shot at what the military stands for."

■ White House complains about use of Clinton footage in movie *Contact*. **Jay Leno** remarks, "They manipulated his image and his words to make it seem like he was saying something he wasn't. See, normally that would be called a campaign."

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THE CONSERVATIVE GIFT SHOP

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NR SWEATSHIRT Join Associate Editor Karina Rollins in the upper ranks of conservative fashion with our new, handsome, top-quality, fleece-lined gray Lee® pullover (also made of 11-ounce "ultraweight" cotton, and boasting *NR*'s logo). How better to keep snug before Spring has sprung. L/XL. $29.00 (**PS**).

NR SPORT SHIRT Like Christopher Weinkopf, *NR*'s dapper Editorial Associate, you too can be *plus chic* with *NR*'s official sport shirt. This white, two-button cotton piqué polo is distinguished by the embroidered *NR* logo (in blue). It's a must for any occasion when the dress code is casual. L/XL. $ 29.95 (**SS**).

NR TEE-SHIRT That's publishing office guru Kevin Longstreet in *NR*'s official Tee-Shirt—top quality, mild-mannered garb made of "heavy," pre-shrunk, 100% cotton that proudly bears the *NR* logo (in our traditional blue on a white background). L/XL/XXL. $14.95 (**TS**). Try our Tees-for-Two offer: two shirts for 25.00 (**TS2**).

NR RAIN SLICKER Associate Publisher Jack Fowler, all wet? Not when he's safe and dry in the *NR* "Right as Rain" poncho. These handsome, water-resistant hooded slickers (with *NR*'s logo on a blue background) are big (50" by 80") and feature non-corroding snaps. Talk about practical! Comes in a compact carrying case (so it's convenient for taking on vacation, to the ballgame, etc.). $10.00 (**RG**).

NR HATS Speaking of the ballgame, the gents are wearing their favorite chapeau: the new *NR* baseball cap. It's so classy (with deep blue peak and highlights, a cream background, and *NR*'s embroidered logo) it's nearly formal wear! One-size-fits-all (courtesy of the adjustable strap). $15.00 (**BC**). If tennis is your sport, you'll flip your lid over the new *NR* Visor, seen here shading the visage of Miss Rollins. It's handsome, practical (thanks to the big peak) and ideological (thanks to the *NR* logo). One size fits all. $12.00 (**TC**).

NR MUG Mr. Longstreet is holding the *NR* mug—the right way to drink a BIG cup (13 ounces) of your favorite libation. Features the *NR* logo on a cobalt blue background. $7.95. (**MG**). Have a second cup: get two *NR* mugs for only $14. (**MG2**)

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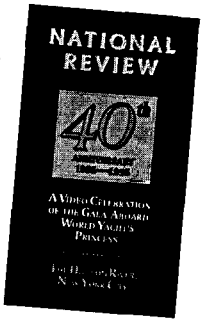

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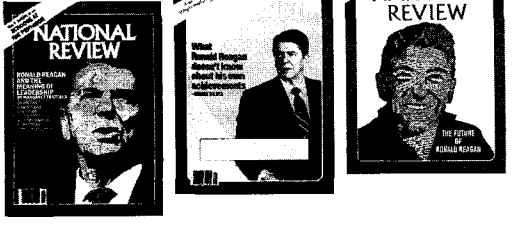

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THE WEEK

■ "Hotline," the daily Washington-based news service, took note: the *Washington Post*'s front-page coverage of the first day of the Iran–Contra hearings: 2,484 words; of the current Senate campaign-finance hearings: 0 words.

■ Republican National Committee officials acknowledge that they have fallen $3 million short of their direct-mail fundraising goals. Apparently, donors have discovered other ways to spend their money. On July 18, one self-described "Disgruntled Republican" took out a full-page advertisement in the *Washington Times*, outlining the sequel to the Contract with America: "the GOP Contract with the Democrats." Action items include: "We promise to remain silent and not embarrass the Democrats on . . . Justice Department Affirmative Action reversals," and, referring to the disputed races in Louisiana and in Orange County, "We will work hard to elect Republicans (Jenkins, Dornan) but if you want to steal the election (Jenkins, Dornan), we won't stop you." At last—the agenda is found.

■ Meanwhile, bi-partisan negotiations over how to conduct a probe of possible wrongdoing in the Jenkins–Landrieu Senate election have resumed—after a brief two-week interruption during which investigators actually went to New Orleans. Republicans on the Senate Rules Committee, headed by John Warner (R., Va.), have been willing to engage the Democrats in interminable talks because a bi-partisan sign-off was necessary to hire outside lawyers and obtain FBI agents for the investigation. But no sooner had the Republicans gotten the Democrats' cooperation, and arranged for lawyers and agents to be assigned to New Orleans, than the Democrats were pulling out. The FBI agents it had taken the Justice Department a month to produce were withdrawn in a day. The Democrats were emboldened by recent developments. It turns out that GOP candidate Woody Jenkins had employed a street hustler called "Papa Bear" Miller to scare up witnesses to voter fraud. Now some of those witnesses are recanting. But others are sticking to their stories, and still others say they have been threatened by anti-Jenkins operatives and ordered to keep quiet. Meanwhile, it has been established that every possible electoral safeguard in New Orleans was disregarded last year. It all adds up to a fine Cajun mess that Senate investigators should be working to cook down. Instead, Democrats are pushing to end the investigation permanently, the result that would most please "Papa Bear" Miller's New Orleans competitors.

■ Still, from the media's point of view, there's nothing wrong with the Thompson hearings that Haley Barbour's testimony won't cure.

■ Social conservatives—and future generations of Americans—have scored two important victories in the last month. Credit for both should go to Sen. Paul Coverdell (R., Ga.). As part of the tax bill, he has inserted educational IRAs that can be used at public, private, parochial, and even home schools. The provision passed the Senate 59 to 41. Another Coverdell amendment would give kids who have been victims of crime at public school a grant to attend private school. If enacted into law, these two provisions could be the camel's nose under the tent for school choice, for both the poor and the middle class. Unless liberals stand in the schoolhouse door.

■ In 1987 a Hudson Institute study predicted a scarcity of white male workers in the U.S. labor force. At least that was the trend many personnel directors, government planners, and social-policy researchers professed to see. The report, *Workplace 2000*, sold 80,000 copies—and astounding figure for think-tank material—and is credited with spawning the "diversity industry," that now-ubiquitous army of sensitivity consultants and their touchy-feely courses designed to help white male managers appreciate the special needs of minority employees. But the just-released *Workplace 2020* claims the earlier study was misread, perhaps deliberately, by the diversity entrepreneurs. According to the new report, white males are, and for the foreseeable future will be, the largest group of new entrants to the workforce, replacing large numbers of older white males who are retiring. If past is prologue, we will soon see a major effort to help minorities and women cope with a persistent white male majority.

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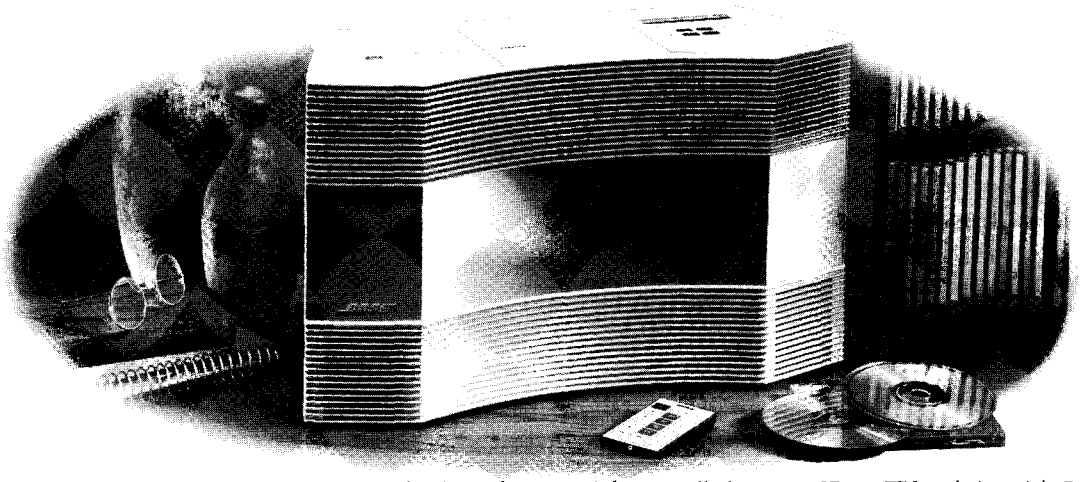

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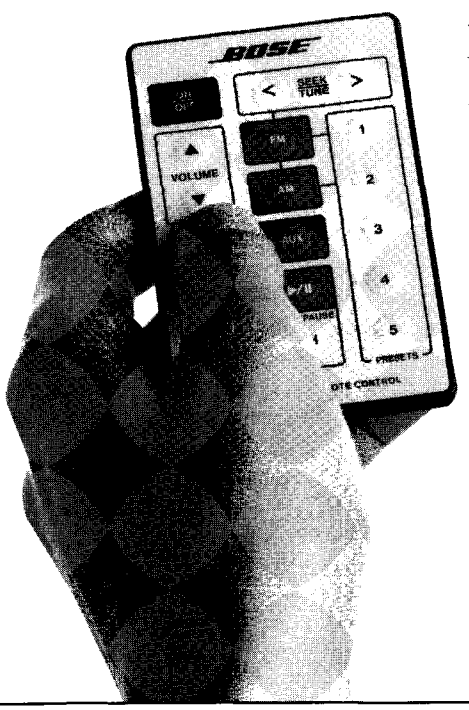

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■ Angela Oh, a member of Bill Clinton's advisory board on race relations, wants a federal department on race. Her model, according to the *New York Post*, is Indonesia's "ministries of unity." Recent Indonesian history has been marked by massacres of Chinese and the invasion of East Timor, so there are still a few kinks in the model, but that's what advisers are for.

■ Americans gave a record $144 billion to charity last year. A miniscule $100 million of that amount went to state and local governments, mainly via programs administered by charitable foundations. So why is Lamar Alexander, the head of the National Commission on Philanthropy and Civic Renewal, admonishing givers, in the commission's report, *Giving Better, Giving Smarter*, to spend less time "as the advance men and women for government"? One example may suffice. In 1991 the Casey Foundation decided that states should do more to improve the mental health of children and offered a $150,000 "planning grant" to the state health officials who came up with the cleverest ideas, promising an additional $3 million if their long-range plans pleased the foundation. Virginia was one of the "winners." But in 1993 the Casey Foundation wrote to then-governor Douglas Wilder, telling him his plan for monitoring children was barely adequate. Threatened with the loss of its grant, the state created an entire new welfare bureaucracy. Last year the state spent $90 million complying with Casey's demands. Nobody voted for the program. When the grant runs out, everyone will pay for it.

■ Proletarian *Uebermensch* Michael Moore stands for the working class of Flint, Michigan, in his film *Roger & Me*, but please look away when he moves to a $1.2-million Manhattan apartment. Now the loudmouthed, self-serving, and not-funny Moore has threatened a libel suit against the online magazine *Salon* for an article calling him "loudmouthed, self-serving, and not funny."

■ A funny thing happened to Joel Millman's just-published book, *The Other Americans: How Immigrants Renew Our Country, Our Economy, and Our Values*, and to his employer, the *Wall Street Journal*, which enthusiastically excerpted his happy-faced anecdotage about enterprising Mexicans transforming New York City's outer boroughs. A slave colony of some sixty deaf Mexican men, women, and children, held in two apartments (some of them for as along as a decade), and forced to beg on the subways, was discovered in the borough of Queens. Most were smuggled illegal immigrants, but the arrested slave-masters appear to have immigrated legally through the "family-reunification" loophole, an example of how legal and illegal immigration interlock. Many immigrant neighbors remained silent about the slave colony because of a traditional hostility toward the police and because the overcrowding and violence struck them as unremarkable. Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's city inspectors, who came and went, must have agreed. Reports now suggest that deaf Mexican beggars are being imported into Rochester, Chicago, Los Angeles, and other cities. Millman says his book did not attempt to assess immigration "in macroeconomic terms"—an astonishing admission but understandable, given that the National Association of Science has now confirmed the emerging academic consensus that immigration imposes a net cost on each American household of $150 to $200 per year. Still, perhaps Mr. Millman could notice the slaves when the paperback comes out?

■ The western community does not like Croatian president Franjo Tudjman. Madeleine Albright flew to Zagreb to berate him, and former Sen. Paul Simon announced that the presidential election in June was "free but not fair," since there is only one opposition newspaper and no opposition TV station—but hey, Paul, try getting a conservative message through the mainstream American media. And yet President Tudjman is extremely popular among his own people. Among other reasons, Croatia's economy has been growing—at a rate of about 6 per cent per year—for three years now; its inflation rate has been about 4 per cent for four years; and Croatia is, apart from Luxembourg, the only European country fulfilling the Maastricht criteria. With almost no foreign help, Croatia successfully completed its first stage of privatization in 1992–1994. Croatia has an investment-grade credit rating, a thriving tourist industry, a modest budget deficit, low public debt, and a finance minister who sometimes sounds like Andrew Mellon. Since the Berlin Wall fell, most of Eastern Europe has seen the thesis of inept liberal professors, followed by the antithesis of neo-Communists or paleo-kleptocrats. In a few countries there is an emerging synthesis: committed to the free market and capable of running a hot-dog stand. Only Croatia skipped the first two phases. The West should applaud, and encourage others to copy.

■ Kudos to *Heterodoxy* for eliciting this one, from animal-rights activist Gary Francione: "It is wrong to assume that fetuses have rights just because some animals do."

Mutiny at Sea

Mr. Archer pops Dramamine daily
Mr. Armey goes armed to the head.
Mr. Paxon, who tried to play Christian,
Bade adieu *from a lifeboat instead.*
Mr. Kasich knows nothing from sailing.
Mr. Gingrich flails freshmen below.
Mr. Reagan was blessedly ga-ga
During services held for Big Mo'.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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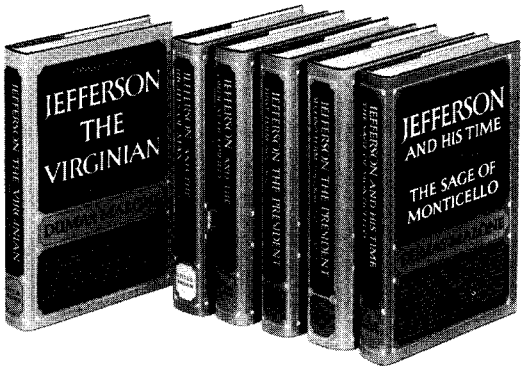
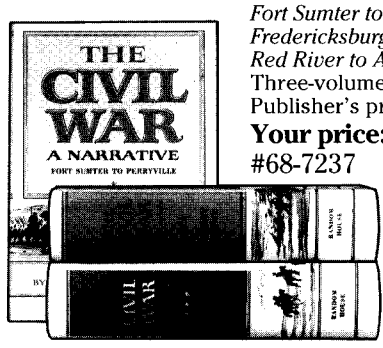


Shelby Foote's THE CIVIL WAR



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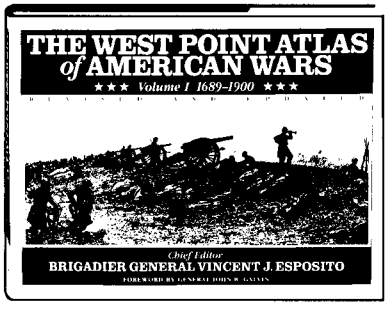

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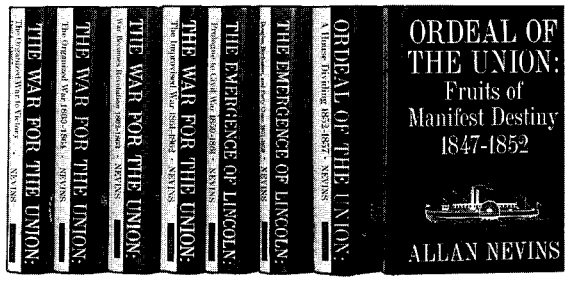
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Gingrich's Ninth Life

NEWT Gingrich has just received a lesson in what can happen to rulers who are neither feared nor loved. Michael Ledeen, author of the forthcoming *Machiavelli for Moderns* and a sometime adviser to the Speaker, argues that the only appropriate response to failed conspirators is "to kill them all": in this case, to organize a successful counter-coup against DeLay, Armey, and Boehner. If Gingrich takes that advice—and heads may have rolled by the time you read this—he will have followed his instincts rather than his interests.

For he will have missed the most important lesson: that the leader of a reformist, populist party in a representative government must stay on the offensive to survive. He should not pick quixotic fights and need not eschew tactical compromises, but he must continue to make strategic advances across a broad front. Instead, Gingrich has narrowed the Republican agenda and adopted a defensive posture. The decision to get the President's signature on a balanced budget at any cost has enabled Clinton to extort concession after concession from a demoralized GOP. That is surely not Gingrich's fault alone. But he should not be surprised that troops without a mission will sometimes direct their energies against one another.

Republicans need an agenda; they need to start taking risks again. Do they also need a new Speaker? Probably eventually—but not today or tomorrow. And while Gingrich remains, he must rally his party with a strong Republican agenda. If he may not be making much more history, he needs to redefine the history that has already happened by giving it a bold ending.

Meanwhile, other Republicans need to start thinking seriously about his successor. There is no dearth of leadership talent—David McIntosh, Bill Paxon, Jim Talent, Chris Cox. But these men need time, and the GOP needs time to judge them. Kate O'Beirne has suggested Henry Hyde as a caretaker Speaker while they mature and compete. Bill Archer, too, would make a fine choice—as would anyone else who is well respected throughout and beyond the Republican conference, a known commodity, and unlikely to want to cling to power for years.

At the end of this session, there will be time to evaluate the situation. But it would be irresponsible to remove the Speaker until there is a clear alternative. When the Kennedy Administration debated overthrowing Ngo Dinh Diem, John Kenneth Galbraith dismissed this problem: "Nothing succeeds like successors." And indeed they did, in dizzying succession, hastening their country's defeat. Republicans have nothing to gain from anarchy.

Pray for Bad Times

Not since the Dauphin clung to Dad,
Off to the gents or, velvet-clad,
Engorging truffles in the keep,
Have Presidents endorsed a Veep.
So early. Sure, it helps morale,
But in a slump it's so long, Al.

—W. H. VON DREELE

Hear No Evil

THE Thompson hearings are about the corruption of politics in more ways than one. While senators had just heard of some 160 White House visits by Lippo executive, Commerce official, and DNC moneyman John Huang, a flack from the DNC stood outside the Senate hearing room handing out an itemized list of "at least 53 articles discussing the ties between John Huang and the White House." The idea was: if it has been reported before, it's no longer a scandal. And the TV networks (Fox excepted) bought it, imposing a news blackout the likes of which would have allowed Richard Nixon to retire in 1977. Since the chief value of our media politics is titillation, we get saturation coverage of Dick Morris and feet, but nothing substantive from the Democratic and Republican conventions; detailed rundowns of Enid Greene Waldholtz's disastrous finances, but ho-hum coverage of hearings into the most far-reaching White House scandal since Watergate.

Indeed, as we go to press, the networks seem likely to give the testimony of former RNC Chairman Haley Barbour the most complete coverage of the hearings. Barbour promised to be *entertaining*, in contrast to the women who testified in monosyllables about John Huang writing to Jakarta for reimbursement of DNC donations and stealing away from his Commerce job to a private office. Barbour offers an *angle*—the Republicans solicit foreign money too!—in contrast to the tired story-line of a possible agent of influence getting classified briefings at the Commerce Department. Above all, Barbour is a *Republican*; if there were still any doubt that TV networks see the world through partisan lenses, the last three weeks should have shredded it. If President Clinton were a Republican there would be no talk of finding a smoking gun, but retrospectives on which of the smoking guns—the coffees? the probable Hubbell hush money? the Riadys?—finally ruined his second term.

Given the circumstances, Fred Thompson has staged hearings about as effectively as could be expected. The committee is slowly building a case that Huang may have been an agent of influence, and Thompson is—as touted—a sober and telegenic front-man. But he continues to be undermined by his own attempts at bi-partisanship. Democrats never should have been allowed to call up

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At the Hearings

With Ding and Dong and Wun Hung Lo
Holed up in China, it's been slow.
John Huang could spill the beans, but he
Won't talk without immunity,
While clinton has so much to spill
His guts would decorate the Hill
And put him on the nursery rack
With pratfall artists Jill and Jack.

—W. H. VON DREELE

Barbour in the third week of the hearings, in the midst of the committee's fragile attempts to build the case against Huang. Thompson might not even have begun his hearings this early—while major investigative work is still going on—if it had not been for the December 31 deadline he allowed Democrats to impose. By now, Thompson should know that for the Democrats any bi-partisan concession is only more leverage with which to spike his investigation. But that is another story—one which major media outlets also have zero interest in covering.

No Peace at Any Price

WITHIN hours of the last ceasefire's breaking down, the leadership of IRA/Sinn Fein began preparing a second ceasefire to come at a time of maximum benefit to the republican "Peace Strategy."

That "Peace Strategy" has two essential aims: to undermine, subvert, and eventually destroy moderate constitutional nationalism (John Hume's Social Democratic and Labour Party) and replace it with militant republicanism; and to force unionists into violent confrontation with the British government as a prelude to persuading London and Dublin to impose an anti-unionist "solution."

This patient strategy was thrown into disarray when the Orange Order rerouted or canceled parades on the 12th of July to avoid fighting. The IRA's response was to bring forward the projected ceasefire.

Tony Blair's new Labour government, despite a promising start elsewhere, has behaved foolishly and perhaps dishonorably in its dealings with IRA/Sinn Fein. It has capitulated to terrorists and undermined democrats. With the active assistance of John Hume and the Irish government, it has given David Trimble, the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party—the largest political party in Northern Ireland—an impossible choice: either walk out, or lose all credibility with his own supporters by entering talks with an IRA that has refused to surrender a single gun. Rival unionist parties have already made it very clear they will leave the talks if Sinn Fein is included on present terms; IRA/Sinn Fein wants Trimble to follow them out and transform the "peace process" into a dialogue between the two governments and the Catholic minority.

Why, then, have London and Dublin acquiesced in this charade? It seems that they were determined to bring the IRA to the conference table at any price, even if it meant more violence in the long run.

For itself, the IRA does not expect to get its aims accepted at the negotiating table. It is playing a longer game. IRA/Sinn Fein expects that the talks will eventually collapse, and that when they do, both governments, fed up with "unionist intransigence," will impose a solution—allowing for, among other things, cross-border bodies with executive powers. The key is that republicans will not have signed on to such a deal. They will welcome it as a first step but demand more talks and further concessions. And when that demand is rejected, they will go back to violence with their arsenal intact.

Judging by the spinelessness both governments have displayed in the past few weeks, there is every prospect that they will try to surrender by degrees to the IRA's demands. But this presupposes that unionists will acquiesce quietly. They won't, and the so-called peace process will result in widespread violent unionist resistance.

Cowardly governments, egos chasing peace prizes, and a hard, ruthless terrorist organization are playing dangerous games with Ireland's future. —SEAN O'CALLAGHAN

Wanted: An Exit Strategy

AMERICAN policy in Bosnia is being pulled in two directions, courting disaster in the process. NATO forces moved in on two Bosnian Serbs indicted for war crimes, arresting one and killing the other. NATO claimed success. Bringing war criminals to justice is one of the goals of the 1995 Dayton accords, and a passionate bi-partisan coalition is pressing the Administration to do so. Questioning this goal seems morally obtuse, yet questions must be asked.

A year ago, Gen. John Shalikashvili, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, was adamant that NATO's troops would *not* arrest war criminals. His fear was "mission creep"—that the achievable objective of policing ceasefire and demarcation lines would be jeopardized by trying to enforce the ambitious (and unenforceable) political goals of Dayton. Yet Gen. Shalikashvili now calls it "terribly important" to apprehend war criminals—at the very moment when pressures are growing in Congress to pull the troops out entirely. The House voted to cut off funds by the Administration's June 1998 withdrawal date; the Senate too voted for withdrawal but gave the President wiggle room for a residual presence.

Fixed deadlines for unconditional withdrawal were the favorite formula of a McGovernite Congress for sabotaging U.S. policy in Vietnam; the logic has not improved

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with age. But the President has tied himself in knots by announcing his own deadlines, then reneging on them. Now he expands the mission at a time when Serb retaliation against American soldiers could unleash a congressional stampede to withdraw.

Arming and training the Bosnians was supposed to be our "exit strategy," but the Administration has been agonizingly slow in getting this done. A U.S. withdrawal also points to partition—but there hasn't been any serious planning for this either. If the Serbs now start targeting Americans, and pressure builds to pull them out precipitately, will the new policy still be a "success"?

Right to Light

THE new world of discourse (and presumably legislation) on tobacco has little room in it for the rights of smokers, or cigarette makers.

Smokers, already penned in tiny waiting rooms, banned from buildings, and exiled to sidewalks and stoops, are headed toward criminal status, as society heads inexorably toward prohibition. (What other possible result could there be of putting tobacco under FDA regulations? For what ailments could it be prescribed?) The government has in the past banned substances consumed for pleasure. But our experience with alcohol and narcotics prohibition should make us cautious. Abraham Lincoln, dependent on the political support of temperance advocates, told them that prohibition was not a temperate policy. The wisdom of his century has been lost in ours.

Smokers will at least see their doom coming. Cigarette makers are being held liable for acts that were legal when performed. This is *ex post facto* law, and the Constitution makes it illegal, but that has not slowed down the health zealots and the trial lawyers. Walter Olson in *Reason* quoted this eloquent arraignment of such law by the Earl of Stafford in the seventeenth century, as he was prosecuted for treason by Puritans: Better to "live under no law at all" and "conform ourselves the best we can to the arbitrary will of a master, than fancy we have a law on which we can rely, and find at last that" it can "try us by maxims unheard of till the very moment of the prosecution."

Since America was founded by Puritans, there will always be a quotient of zeal in the culture. This is good, when it is applied to proper ends—morality and liberty. When zealots campaign to make us live forever, liberty (at the very least) suffers.

Henry Salvatori, RIP

PROFESSOR Larry Arnn, the head of the Claremont Institute in California, sends out a bulletin to his friends:

"On July 7 our dear friend and benefactor Henry Salvatori passed away at the age of 96. He lived a splendid life. He was one of those people who succeed at virtually every task to which they turn their hand. If he started a business, it became very large and made money for everyone who invested. If he gave to a charity, it pursued a hard mission with diligence and success. If he picked a politician—well, it is sufficient to say that he picked Ronald Reagan.

"In recent years I came to know much about his life, having written an extensive biography of him. He was reticent about this, and I'll need to deliberate with his friends whether it would be right, at some point, to publish it. I can say here that he was an immigrant boy of modest means; that he lived a life in business of adventure and entrepreneurship; that he followed the golden rule as

The Week in Verse

How blest am I to have survived this coup
To lead my *Armey* till two thousand two,
And coach my loyal team, in spite of polls,
To more exciting (losing) Super Bowls.
The Grace of God (no doubt) exposed that ring
Of *Largent*, *Graham*, *Scarborough*, and *King*
And others who the regicide had planned:
My enemies delivered to my hand!
But what of *Armey*, *Boehner*, and *DeLay*,
Who swear they never once thought to betray
When (as I find) with *Paxon* they conferred.
'Twas to dissuade him, sure—I have their word!
But I who once read *Shakespeare* (as a teen)
Imagine, somehow, quite another scene—

"Upon what meat hath this our *Gingrich* fed
That he's so mighty grown?" lean *DeLay* said.
"This man who quails at Clinton's slightest nod
Has now become (as *Armey*) like a god,
Though no more god-like, he, than thou or I"—
And saw an answ'ring gleam in *Paxon's* eye,
Who fingered longingly his rubber sword
And thought of how as *Speaker* (his reward)
He'd show those *Democrats* a thing or three
And put some backbone in the GOP.

Ha! Let him find his own! Great *Caesar's* frown
This *Brutus* frightens forthwith out of town
While *Cassius-DeLay* scampers back to me
With desp'rate haste to swear his loyalty.
And are those men to play King of the Hill
With *Gephardt*—let alone to fight with Bill?
Don't make me laugh! They wouldn't stand a chance
Of slowing down the *Democrat* advance.
They haven't got the brilliance or the guts
It took for me to win those big tax cuts
Or lead the party on its final mission
Which, thanks to me, is perm'nant *Opposition*!

—JUVENAL

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a manager, competitor, and citizen; that he invented and built a major industry; that he married and loved the same fine woman for 52 years and with her raised two children; that he fought without fear for causes that were high and difficult; that he held no malice; that he gave vastly and asked nothing—would indeed accept nothing—in return; that his love of country was pure, selfless, and intelligent.

"Today in the news there is much talk of the evil of money politics. Henry Salvatori was the leader of the small group who called on Ronald Reagan to propose that he stand for governor of California. They promised him two things: that they would take care of the money question; and that they would accept no favor, no office, no appointment in return. I have searched the archives of Henry Salvatori and of Ronald Reagan. I find no breach of this promise. He was not born a citizen of this land he came to love. He earned his place by such deeds as this, compounded many times."

And the opening paragraph from a speech I gave at a Claremont Institute dinner honoring Henry Salvatori:

"I have one advantage over you all here tonight, and I am not referring to my singular political wisdom. It is that I have known the guest of honor, I warrant, longer than anyone else present. I first met him in 1954, in New York City, in the little building from which my father deployed his imagination as an oil entrepreneur. I don't know what Henry Salvatori was doing in the family offices. I was merely introduced to him when I was en route to the cubicle I occupied during the three months I spent as an apprentice oil tycoon. But I have to conclude from observing his resources and comparing them with those of my family that, in dealing with us, he scored yet another economic conquest."

When I first met Henry Salvatori we were only a few years in the Cold War, on a collision course with dystopia. It would be 35 more years before the Berlin Wall came down, signaling the end of the most highly organized threat to liberty in the history of the world.

During that period we relied on such inanimate objects as a nuclear repository. But we relied above all on sane thought and a clear and liberating determination. I know nobody who by his example more strikingly incarnated the ideals of reason and liberty than Henry Salvatori. He did everything he could do as an individual to inspire the confidence and the devotion of the men and women who worked with him for all those years. And then he took the fruits of a lifetime's work and put them at the disposal of men and women of a younger generation, charging only that they pursue the ideals he so eloquently served since the day when at age six he got off the boat from Italy, and began a lifetime of productive work, leaving signs of his personal grace everywhere he lived and worked.

Among the beneficiaries of Henry Salvatori's generosity was NATIONAL REVIEW. He was an early investor in it and never failed to act on our annual request. The editors join in extending condolences to his family. —WFB*

*WFB would be grateful if none of his friends and heroes died during the next fortnight, as he plans a vacation.

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

I believe it was while I was in Nam thirty years ago that you ran a news item about a race riot in Chicago. The riot supposedly started when a black patron of a liquor store objected because the white dog on the Black & White Scotch label was bigger than the black dog.

I have used the story on liberals ever since. Although the story clearly makes them nervous, the liberals always claimed it could never have happened that way.

Till now. The following letter actually really and truly ran in the *Record*, *Pravda*'s voice in Bergen County:

> Editor, the *Record*:
>
> I'd like to call your attention to the subliminally sexist message of one of our most common roadside signs: the "school-crossing" sign that appears in almost every neighborhood in the country. This sign features a picture of two children, a boy and a girl, crossing the street together. The boy is much taller than the girl, portraying the part of the older brother, while the girl's role is that of the dependent younger sister. The boy seems to have his hand gripping the little girl's elbow, as if he were guiding her. All these details suggest that the boy is dominant, and the girl is weaker. I suggest that half of our school-crossing signs be changed to show a taller girl and a smaller boy. A small change like this could give American children a much better sense of the full range of possible relationships between males and females. Sarah McGarth

I was sorely tempted to suggest that new signs make up for years of oppression by showing the taller girl kicking the crap out of the smaller boy. However, that would probably bring on a *Record* editorial about the dialect of the class struggle. I can only stand just so much hilarity.

Cordially,
William D. Watkins
River Edge, N.J.

Dear Mr. Watkins: You are right to despair, unless you remember that to do so is a mortal sin. It is perhaps a relief that Big Brother now becomes Big Sister. Cordially,
WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Having just received my NATIONAL REVIEW Gold MasterCard, I hereby await permission to begin charging to my heart's delight.

Sincerely,
Edward Loss Jr.
College Park, Md.

Dear Mr. Loss: Having acquired a NATIONAL REVIEW MasterCard, you should declare in favor of private deficit spending, while of course maintaining our collegiate position against federal deficit spending. Cordially, **—WFB**

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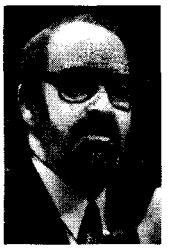

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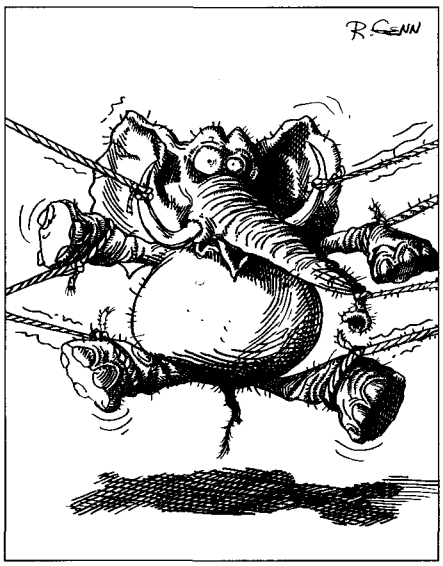

Roman Genn

WASHINGTON, D.C.

JULIUS Caesar could have used Brutuses like this. In the confused wake of a failed attempt to depose Newt Gingrich as Speaker of the House, that may be the only point about which there is near-unanimity. Leading House Republicans—if that phrase isn't an oxymoron now—are still putting reporters through the spin cycle with competing, and self-serving, versions of events. So here's my positive spin, free of charge to the Republican National Committee: Republicans have flattered the public by vindicating its judgment that they were not to be trusted with complete control of the Federal Government.

The story began on the evening of July 8, as Gingrich's deputies met to discuss how to get their act together. Organization, procedures, communications needed to be revamped so as to avoid humiliations like the June disaster-relief fiasco; Gingrich might have to be reined in. Fourth-ranking Republican Rep. John Boehner (Ohio) walked into the meeting and told the others to forget trying to salvage Gingrich's operation: it was all over for the Speaker. Boehner said he had spoken to Gingrich's most vociferous conservative critics, and they were planning to go to the floor to oust him. Since many Republicans had returned from the July Fourth recess dismayed to learn that their constituents still considered Gingrich an issue and dreading the prospect of his still being an issue at the next recess, the rebels were likely to succeed.

The other Republicans present—Majority Leader Dick Armey (Tex.), whip Tom DeLay (Tex.), and Bill Paxon (N.Y.)—had the natural human reaction: they wondered what this development would mean for them. Armey piped up that he was sick and tired of saving Gingrich. "If they try to take Gingrich down I won't lift a finger to help him," he said. "I'm going to run for Speaker and I want Henry Hyde to nominate me." The response was stunned silence followed by further speculation. They deputized DeLay, who is the closest of the bunch to the hard-core class of '94, to "go to the roof and see if there really are jumpers," in the words of an aide to one of those present—i.e., to verify Boehner's story and gauge the strength and seriousness of the rebels.

So on Thursday, July 10, DeLay approached Lindsey Graham (S.C.) on the House floor and said they had to talk. (Some accounts have DeLay telling Graham that Gingrich's deputies wanted to remove Gingrich and asking whether the rebels would support them; it appears that DeLay wasn't that aggressive.) In Graham's office Thursday evening, DeLay asked the rebels whether they had thought through their plans. Who would be Gingrich's successor? What was to stop the Democrats and a handful of Republican defectors from electing a Republican squish as Speaker? The rebels tossed out various names and possibilities, but reached no consensus. Some weren't sure it was the right time to topple Gingrich. It was clear they didn't have their ducks in a row.

Most press accounts of the abortive coup feature the meeting in Graham's office, but there were other meetings on Wednesday and Thursday. Groups of three rebels met with each individual member of the leadership (except Gingrich, of course). And sundry conversations took place in the corridors of the Capitol. The rebels received the distinct impression that the leaders were willing and eager to dump Gingrich.

In any case, on Thursday night DeLay reported back to the others—*sans* Boehner, who couldn't be found. DeLay seems to have mentioned to Armey that a lot of the rebels were saying that Paxon would have broader support than Armey as Speaker. (A few drinks may have been consumed.) At that point or soon thereafter Armey stopped toying with the idea of vacating the Speaker's chair. The following morning, with the plot apparently over, the leaders agreed to brief Gingrich on how they had put down an attempted revolt.

By the time that meeting happened, Gingrich already knew. Thursday night Rep. Steve Largent (Okla.), an overeager member of the anti-Gingrich cabal, had tried to recruit moderate, and Gingrich ally, Chris Shays (Conn.) to the cause; Largent told Shays the motion to vacate the chair would be made Friday. Shays declined, and tipped Gingrich off. So did Rep. Mike Parker (Miss.). In addition, Armey had his chief of staff, Kerry Knott, call Gingrich's chief of staff, Arne Christenson, to warn him that something was afoot and to promise to keep him posted. (Armey's camp says the call was placed before the meeting with DeLay and Paxon.) The other

The other leaders strongly suspect that Armey himself met with Gingrich Friday morning and made a separate peace.

Mr. Ponnuru is NR*'s national reporter.*

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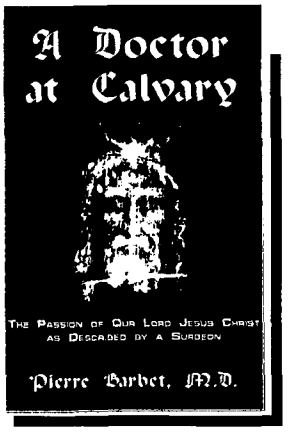

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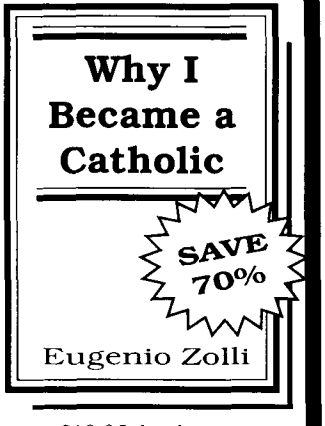

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leaders strongly suspect that Armey himself met with Gingrich Friday morning and made a separate peace.

Later Friday morning, Armey, Boehner, DeLay, and Paxon met with Gingrich and told him they had put down a revolt. Gingrich was livid that they had kept him in the dark for so long. Then the quartet met with the rebels and told them to get in line: among other things, deposing Gingrich would be "immoral"—a claim whose audacity may have been what motivated one of the rebels to leak the events of the week to Sandy Hume, a reporter for the *Hill*, a Capitol Hill weekly.

In any case, the story broke the next Wednesday, July 16. Armey's office quickly released a statement: "House Majority Leader Dick Armey made the following comment upon reading the wild inaccuracies and bizarre mischaracterizations printed in the *Hill* today: 'Any and all allegations that I was involved in some ridiculous plot to oust the Speaker are completely false, and, in fact, ludicrous . . .'" At a meeting of House Republicans that day to select a leader to replace Susan Molinari (N.Y.), moderate and Gingrich-loyalist Jim Walsh (N.Y.) asked the leaders to apologize to the Speaker or deny specific falsehoods in the article. Armey insisted that the story was false. Graham then erupted, bursting out of his chair to go to the microphone and denounce Armey—but was physically restrained by Rep. Richard Pombo (Calif.). (Armey's camp says that Graham later told Armey he had misunderstood the latter's position, but other sources hotly dispute this point.)

Wednesday night, Paxon, DeLay, and Chief Deputy Whip Dennis Hastert cornered Gingrich and Armey to survey the damage. Boehner wasn't there. (He is a unifying figure for warring Republican factions: nobody trusts him.) Paxon was upset over, among other things, an AP story he felt exculpated Armey, while fingering DeLay and himself as anti-Gingrich agitators. Unprompted and angry, Paxon said that maybe he should offer to resign from his leadership position, which Gingrich had created for him. Gingrich said nothing, but Armey snapped, "I'll take it now." On Thursday morning Gingrich sent Christenson, his chief of staff, to tell Paxon his resignation had been accepted. Gingrich's office then put out the word that the resignation had been *his* idea. (Some reporters bought it.)

The Republican intrigues haven't ended; they've merely shifted targets. The day after Paxon's departure was announced, Gingrich met with 15 moderates, including Bob Ney (Ohio) and Jim Nussle (Iowa, and fresh from presenting himself as the *anti*-Gingrich candidate in the race to succeed Molinari). The moderates want to depose DeLay, whose role in the plot has been exaggerated. DeLay's relationship with Armey is strained, and there's some evidence that Gingrich and Armey are working against him. There may be an attempt to replace him with Hastert on July 23.

If it works, the moderates will have taken over the leadership. Conservative attacks on Gingrich over the last year have succeeded only in aligning him firmly with the moderate camp. As it stands, DeLay is the most reliable conservative check on Gingrich within the leadership. Now Jennifer Dunn and Deborah Pryce, both generally considered moderates, have been elected to leadership positions. The remaining conservative leaders would be a weakened Armey, a distrusted Boehner, and Chris Cox (Calif.), who as chairman of the Republican Policy Committee is often kept out of the loop. It wouldn't be a leadership that looks like the Republican caucus. Worse, there could be a chain reaction, with allies of DeLay demanding other leaders' heads. (*NR* will have daily updates on its website.)

Possibly including Gingrich's. He is left pretty much where he's been for months: atop the GOP mountain, but perched precariously. The Republican conference is closing ranks behind Gingrich; the impression is solidifying that his most vociferous internal critics are troublemakers and malcontents—and incompetent ones at that. But the Speaker has also lost an important asset: the perception that his likely successor would be worse. Paxon has now supplanted Armey as heir apparent.

Gingrich might have been better off refusing Paxon's resignation. He could have told the conference that even as his mistakes had been forgiven, so would Paxon's and the others'. But that option would have taken a generosity of spirit, or at least an ability to feign it, for which he is not noted. Instead he allowed Paxon to separate himself from an increasingly discredited leadership and to appear to have resigned on principle (which may even be true).

The Majority Leader, meanwhile, has been reduced to screaming at reporters that he's still trustworthy. His aides are showing signs of desperation, repeatedly revising their stories and offering lame excuses for their boss. Michele Davis says Armey took Paxon's resignation "under his breath," "as an aside": "It wasn't even directed at Paxon." And his comment about taking Gingrich down was preceded by his saying, "I would never do anything to undermine the Speaker." They're trying hard to lay all the blame on Paxon and DeLay.

It's all an awful lot of trouble to determine who gets to be Speaker in the next Congress. Or maybe Minority Leader. □

Hearings Impaired

RICH LOWRY

WASHINGTON, D.C.

OPENING the second week of his Asiagate hearings in the Hart Senate Office Building hearing room, Sen. Fred Thompson remarks dryly: "Today we'll hear from some of the few people who worked for Lippo who have remained in the United States." Sitting at the center of a raised semi-circular dais draped in red velvet, Thompson has his own gravitational field. Whenever he stands up or sits down, cameramen whirr and click around him. Whenever he speaks, it's in a low, grave voice that commands attention. This morning, his 6'5" frame hulking behind the microphone, Thompson announces: "I call Juliana Utomo, please."

And nothing happens. Juliana Utomo is one of the few Lippo employees still in the country because she was just a bookkeeper who briefly had an office on the same floor as John Huang. But where is she now? A minute or so passes, the committee room silent except for

Mr. Lowry is NR*'s national political reporter.*

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Why Liberal Catholicism Is So Deadly

The liberal, anti-doctrinal spirit is poisoning the Catholic Church in America. Liberal Catholics don't like to talk about sin and its consequences. But then why did Christ bother to get crucified? And what are we saved from? Liberal priests are silent about Hell — but if there's no Hell, why be good? Indeed, why go to church? Not surprisingly, church attendance has dropped dramatically. Liberals are forever bellyaching about the "sexist, homophobic, oppressive" Church. Thus they're unable to attract many converts. Liberal clerics excuse their people from the Church's high sexual standards. No wonder certain of them would excuse themselves too, hence so many sex scandals among the clergy. Liberal priests don't explain Catholic teaching to their flocks. No wonder Catholics are being won over by fundamentalists, cults, and New Agers, who *do* know what they believe and why.

Liberal Catholicism denies the binding character of Scripture, tradition, and Magisterium: One need only "follow one's conscience," which amounts to doing only what's convenient. Why belong to a church which preaches *that*? People instinctively do what's convenient, without any coaxing from the clergy. Liberal Catholics are just imitators of liberal *Protestants*. By making Christianity comfortably ambiguous, have liberal Protestant churches been flooded with converts? No. They're actually dying! Why? Because they offer *no authoritative answers* to life's big questions: why am I here? what is true religion and virtue? how do I get to Heaven? By essentially turning themselves into debate clubs and therapy centers, they've failed to offer people anything unique and unsurpassable. They elicit no commitment and little interest.

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the rustlings of reporters and spectators. The assembled senators face an empty witness table, the three or four microphones pointing at unoccupied black, high-backed chairs. Finally the diminutive Miss Utomo is escorted from a door at the front of the room, but the brief delay raises the question: What if you held major Senate hearings and no one showed up?

It's a query that must have occurred to Thompson more than once in recent weeks. Neither major witnesses nor the TV networks have shown up at his hearings, the former either somewhere in Shanghai or ready to plead the Fifth, the latter not convinced Thompson has anything more newsworthy than the latest diet-pill controversy. It has made the early going for Thompson a schlep through passive-aggressive or uninformative witnesses, in a patient attempt to build a convincing enough circumstantial case of Administration wrongdoing that the public will begin to pay attention. For now, neither Charlie Trie nor Mike McCurry is sweating.

Thompson is fighting not only public apathy, but also a Democratic defense that is well coordinated, dogged, and often downright low. His hearings got off to a difficult start when ranking minority member John Glenn wrong-footed him with John Huang's surprise offer of testimony in exchange for "partial immunity" (which, it turns out, a congressional committee can't grant). Thompson was told of the letter making the offer just 15 minutes before the hearings. Chief GOP counsel Michael Madigan would later complain to reporters that Democratic committee staff were in contact with Huang's lawyer as late as 6:30 A.M. the day of the hearings—putting rushed final touches on their ambush.

The Democrats have demonstrated again and again that they regard the hearings only as an occasion for partisan warfare. With Juliana Utomo at the witness table, committee Republicans marched through a series of documents showing that three Lippo holding companies were losing hundreds of thousands of dollars in 1992 and 1993 at the same time they were making major contributions to the Democrats. In one case, Lippo's California-based Hip Hing Holdings contributed $50,000 to the DNC Victory Fund; then Huang wrote to Lippo in Jakarta, Indonesia, asking for a reimbursement. The $50,000, then, was a direct flow of foreign money into Democratic coffers, and the other contributions seemed to be as well.

Chief Democratic counsel Alan Baron nonetheless tried to show that the Lippo companies had enough, or in some cases, *almost* enough income to cover the contributions. He deliberately ignored the expense side of the ledger, which left each of the companies deep in the red and dependent on foreign funds. Sen. Carl Levin (D., Mich.)—who with his bifocals and comb-over looks like the grandfather from the Addams Family—mentioned a shady contribution from Japanese-born businessman Michael Kojima to George Bush in 1992, "since it happens to be the same year" (even reporters laughed at this). It took moderate Sen. Joe Lieberman (D., Conn.) to admit that the source of the Huang contribution looked foreign, but

Roman Genn

even then Sen. Bob Torricelli (D., N.J.) started again to insist the Lippo companies could have covered their own contributions.

No one embodies the Democratic scandal defense quite like Lanny Davis, a White House official whose career is devoted entirely to debunking alleged Clinton wrongdoing. Needless to say, he is a busy man. Otherwise unremarkable—average height, dark complexion, eyeglasses with clunky out-of-style frames—Davis attracts a crowd of scribbling reporters outside the hearing room ready to get their background "White House official" quotes. As Davis talks, his fingers compulsively knead a battered notebook he holds in his hands, perhaps an unconscious reaction to being forced every day to dispense spin that rarely passes the laugh test—even with himself.

The day after news of the $50,000 Huang contribution breaks, Davis tells a group of reporters that there was "not a word in your coverage about Mr. Kojima. We only ask for some even-handedness." The reporters chuckle, and Davis too smiles. The next day he is furiously denouncing Thompson as a partisan attack-dog, waving around a newspaper editorial, and begins baiting the wry GOP chief counsel, Michael Madigan, who is standing just steps away sipping coffee from a styrofoam cup. At moments like this Davis resembles nothing so much as a College Democrat, free of any restraint of scruple or maturity. In the midst of the display, a TV reporter asks Davis if he would step in front of the cameras. Davis, bad on TV, demurs. Why? presses the reporter. "Bashful," says Davis, and smiles again—another untruth.

Sen. Lieberman did step in front of the cameras during the second week of the hearings to say—in his always measured tones—that he too was convinced that there had been a secret Chinese plan to influence the 1996 U.S. elections. Thompson had alleged the plan in his remarks opening the hearings, and Democrats—even Lieberman—had attacked him for a week for going beyond the evidence. But after an FBI briefing, committee Democrats agreed that there had been a Chinese plan, although it was unclear whether it had been implemented or extended to the presidential level.

The most titillating possibility is that John Huang was somehow an agent of that plan. Huang's former superior at the Commerce Department, Jeffrey Garten, testified that Huang was "totally unqualified" for his job. Even though Garten "walled off" Huang from Asian policy, he routinely received classified briefings. Huang called the Lippo offices or Lippo-related people some four hundred times during his tenure at Commerce (a number that is "troubling" says Lieberman). And he would sometimes mysteriously repair to the offices of the Lippo-affiliated Stephens Company, where he had access to a copier, telephone, and fax machine. Meanwhile, Huang was in and out of the White House as often as a Cabinet member.

None of which proves anything necessarily. Democrats emphasize the more innocent circumstances. A former White House personnel official testified that placing Huang at Commerce was such a high priority because he was a diversity

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hire. Huang got his classified briefings not at his own prompting but that of his immediate boss. He always went to the Stephens office in broad daylight, and his calls to Lippo were typically brief. So the only thing that can be said for sure about Huang is that he probably wasn't—as a Democratic lawyer strained to imply—picking up faxes at Stephens in connection with his work with Maya Lin and Yo Yo Ma on the Asian-American civic group, the Committee of 100.

The latter suggests why Madigan has been complaining to reporters that committee Democrats are acting like Huang defense lawyers. When he conveyed Huang's immunity offer, John Glenn explained that Huang "has been described to me as a man proud of his heritage" and he wants to testify because "He believes the interests of the [Asian-American] community have been harmed by allegations surrounding him." But Huang will never testify without more immunity protection than Republicans are willing to grant, and neither will the other major players. This doesn't stop Democrats from complaining almost daily about the parade of low-level witnesses before the committee.

And sometimes they don't want to hear even from them (the only witness they are really interested in is former RNC Chairman Haley Barbour). For weeks, Republicans have wanted to grant immunity to Buddhist nuns involved in the Gore temple fundraiser. But the Justice Department has been objecting, even though the nuns can't possibly be targets for prosecution. When Thompson wanted to vote on immunity near the end of the second week of hearings, John Glenn balked. No need to rush, he explained, because the witnesses in question could have backgrounds including "bank robbery or murder." (So much for vows of poverty.) No reporter could sleep through the resulting round of guffaws.

Thompson is fighting a Democratic defense that is well coordinated, dogged, and often downright low.

Whether or not Glenn eventually goes along with immunity (for daily updates see www.nationalreview.com), he bought a couple of days. Considering the December 31 deadline for the committee's work, every delay is precious, as Democrats try to duplicate the result in the Travelgate and Filegate scandals—numerous outstanding, deeply troubling questions erased by the indifference of time. The biggest risk Democrats have is over-reaching. In response to the latest revelations, even the *New York Times* urged serious scrutiny of the China allegations. The same day the DNC rushed out a press release saying it wanted "one thing absolutely clear: We fully support an investigation into any effort by the Chinese government to influence the U.S. political process." Who says the Thompson hearings haven't produced news? □

Ex-Navy Engineer Puts Armor-Piercing Material on a Driver. Outguns Steel and Titanium on Distance.

PGA professionals outhit their titanium drivers by 25 and 50 yards

by Mike Hensen

YALESVILLE, CT – And you thought steel and titanium were tough. Well, steel and titanium can't penetrate an armor-plated tank or sink a warship. To pierce their defenses the military had to make something so powerful it had to keep it secret... so powerful that once it was declassified, some innovative company would surely apply it to the face of a golf club to add distance.

One has and it doesn't bode well for golf's current state-of-the-art metal, titanium. A well-known professional outhit his own titanium driver with the new club by 25 yards. Another Tour professional outhit his titanium driver by almost 50 yards!

The new driver is the creation of a former Naval Ordnance engineer who used to apply the material to the tips of torpedoes, and a small golf company in Connecticut.

The material – called CT-20 – is twice as hard as steel and 70% harder than titanium. It whacks a ball with such force that at clubhead speeds of 120 MPH – the level of longball champs – the new club split the cover on some balls.

CT-20 also increases a golfer's accuracy by holding the ball on the face of the club four times longer than steel and titanium. This makes off-center shots far less likely to hook or slice, and allows a good golfer to draw and fade the ball with more control. I watched a top Tour professional test the club at a PGA Tournament. Here's what he told me.

"I'm hitting the ball 30 yards past my driver and controlling it like a five-iron. You see all my competitors smiling at me? That's not admiration. It's worry."

A company spokesman said this.

"It's basic physics. The harder you hit a ball, the farther it goes, and the Condor® Armor-Pierce (the club's name) clobbers a ball like a battering ram. The club also reduces *abnormal* spins. That's why he's controlling his 300-yards shots like a five-iron. You know who he is? (I said I did.) He loves the club. I wish he weren't tied up with a big company. He would shoot in the 50's with it. Imagine that on TV. Titanium drivers would be history before he changed shoes, especially at the Condor Armor-Pierce's price."

The once-secret CT-20 is backed up by a stainless steel head, the same size as a titanium driver (250 cc's) for maximum forgiveness. To maximize clubhead speed it comes with a 45-inch graphite shaft, or a new big butt Turbo/Tip™ graphite shaft with extra weight in the tip.

You can order and test the Condor Armor-Pierce for 30 days by calling **1-800-285-3900** any time or day or faxing 1-203-284-1623. Or you can send your name, address and check (or cc number and expiration date) to NGC Golf **(Dept. TC-73)**, 60 Church St., Yalesville, CT 06492. The club cost only $129.00 (a fraction of the cost of titanium clubs) and you can add the 3 and 5-woods for only $109.00 each. Add $20.00 to these prices for the new TurboTip (big butt) shaft. Add $10.00 shipping Specify regular or stiff flex, men's or ladies', right or left-handed. There's a 30-day money back guarantee, if the clubs are returned undamaged.

Oh, yes. If you swing at 120 MPH, take some extra balls.

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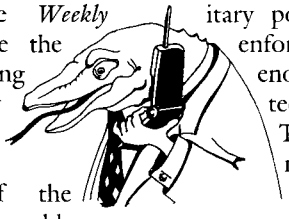
GEKKO

WE'RE being presented with a pretty stark choice these days by the competing brands of financial forecasters. On one side are the "new paradigm" people, led by techno-optimists such as *Wired* magazine, some *Forbes* editors, and the *Weekly Standard*. Then there are the prophets of doom, including Jim Grant and his *Interest Rate Observer* crowd, Norman Macrae, the former deputy editor of the *Economist*, and naturally, the gold-bugs and short-sellers who are still alive. The question is this: Are we in a replay of 1929 or at the beginning of the Age of Aquarius? Does the "technology" revolution mean that the business cycle has been repealed?



No. It doesn't. I put the word technology in quotes because new-paradigm people seem to forget that there have been technological revolutions in the past. For example, the electric motor and the automobile—which respectively revolutionized the supply and the demand side of American life in the 1920s—did not change human nature. Manufacturers using decentralized power sources still overbuilt their plants, and newly mobile consumers overborrowed for houses and goods and overbought stocks. The U.S. Government, which at the end of the decade was presided over by one of the best educated, most accomplished social planners of the century, still didn't know what was going on in front of its very eyes.

That sounds kind of crusty and anti-progress, so let me add that the doom-and-gloom crowd I usually hang out with are often wrong in some important ways. The new-paradigm people are right that the relative importance of commodities and physical products has been reduced by the increased effectiveness of computing and telecommunications technology. The fraction of our GDP contributed by commodities has fallen in half, from roughly 20 per cent to 10 per cent, since the commodities price inflation of the early Seventies. So even if Jim Rogers is right, and we're about to pay much more for our copper, nickel, coffee, and soybeans, it doesn't matter as much as it once did. Real value is added to our economy and lives by those biotechnology companies with risky balance sheets. American military potential, and our ability to enforce a semi-peaceful state, is enormously enhanced by our technology and industrial base. The American version of economic reform and corporate governance has become the conventional wisdom throughout the world.

All that means that when trouble comes, it will not be in a the same form as in the past. And again, technological change matters, but not as much as human nature. If markets have more to do with capitalizing the cash flows from technology companies than from resource companies, they still will overshoot on both the upside and the downside. The fantasies of war without casualties are as old as war itself. If we want to remain a world power, let alone a superpower, ground troops will have to eat mud and dust and get killed while they're killing even more of our future enemies. And "the trouble with prosperity," in Jim Grant's phrase, is that it lowers our guard against unforeseen and unforseeable events.

More specifically, while I do not think we are right up against a depression, I do think we are going to get a big drop in the price of equities. The increased diversification of American investment, which means we own a lot more Brazilian, Russian, and Indonesian paper than we once did, won't protect investors as much as they think, because those "uncorrelated" world markets are moving much more in synch with each other than they once did. I don't know what event will trigger the decline, but there are a lot of possibilities, since stock prices now reflect a common perception of the economic future that is not consistent with historical experience.

"They want the rich to pay for everything. Now that's what I call 'capital punishment.'"

Look at just one component of the valuation of equities: analysts' expectations of future earnings. Right now, near the peak of the U.S. business cycle, the current profit growth estimates that stock analysts are using are in the 85th percentile of the experience over the last thirty years. In other words, earnings hit or exceeded the market's current assumptions only 15 per cent of the time, which means stock investors, especially those who invest in a broad cross-section of the market, are betting the ranch on an unlikely outcome. The last time U.S. corporations' earnings turned in as good a five-year record as they just have was between 1962, the first year of a profit recovery, and 1967, just as Vietnam–Great Society inflation was kicking in. So we would have to repeat that record to justify these equity prices in terms of future earnings. Maybe. And maybe you'll win Lotto.

It's when you look at the most likely risks that the debate gets hot. Personally, I think that the people who have the illusion they are in charge of the world's economies have all been preparing for the last war. In the States, for example, we are well prepared for another domestic banking crisis. The bankers know that if they lend to crooked, overleveraged real-estate developers in Houston, they are asking for trouble. Regulators, of course, are on the lookout for high-flying leveraged-buyout specialists. Capital ratios for our banks are much more rigorously monitored than they were in the past. When consumer lending got out of hand about a year ago, chargeoffs were forced and standards tightened.

Fine. When trouble comes, don't worry, your bank is likely to be safe. But we are not paying much attention to our dependence on foreign capital flows. That's no secret; you can read all the relevant stats in the Federal Reserve's publications, and occasionally hear them deplored by talking heads on

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the most tedious cable networks. But we don't want to know, because it's not fun and we want to have fun. But we borrow nearly three dollars out of a hundred in our GDP, which is a lot, given that real interest rates here are already pretty high. While our budget deficit is coming down, we still need that foreign money to keep our private sector going. Ironically, it is probably the very good news in our stock market that is contributing to our requirement for foreign cash, since the illusory increased wealth from equities prices probably encourages Americans to believe they can be rich without saving. Which they can, if only for a while.

At the moment, central banks in Europe and Japan are pumping out a lot of liquidity into their domestic economies. This easy credit doesn't have enough takers at home, and so, like mercury, water, or bad jokes, it flows quickly to a lower level, i.e., us. But suppose that Europe and Japan finally recover from their doldrums of recent years. They'll use their liquidity at home, leaving American investors holding the bag as our interest rates go up and stock prices go down. It wouldn't be the end of the world for the United States, but it would be the end of the best-of-all-possible-worlds that we are beginning to think is our due.

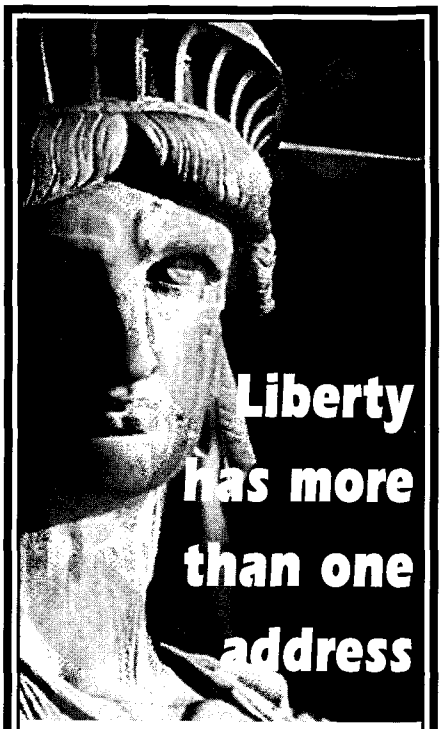
In the emerging markets, or backward nations, as my grandmother used to call them, they are also preparing for their last war, which was the mirror image of what we went through. The high-growth emerging markets, old people will recall, went through what they called balance-of-payments crises in the late Seventies and Eighties, with a mild reprise after the Mexico crisis of 1994. So naturally the best and brightest in these countries have learned that they need to build up large foreign-exchange reserves and diversify their sources of foreign capital. No longer do they depend on Citibank in between IMF programs. Now they issue bonds, prepare public reports in the neat form that gweilos/gringos like, and are well prepared to lie about defending their currency right up to the moment they devalue.

So their problems are contained, right? Just as they say in those fund brochures, right? Sorry, but no. The countries—they are countries, not just "markets"—have spent much time and care on their official finances that might better have been used on their banking systems. For when these countries have their crash, it won't be because John Reed at Citibank has decided to call loans to their central banks, but because the local bankers have lent excessively and corruptly to the wrong customers. As always, it's the fast-developing dynamic markets that are most likely to experience credit problems. Houston and Calgary in the Seventies, Taipei and Shanghai in the Nineties; when people get the sense that there are no limits, they behave as if there aren't.

So now conservative estimates place non-performing loans in, for example, China at 40 or 50 per cent of the total. And that's while the boom is still on. China plus Hong Kong has the largest official reserves in the world, and the largest crop of bad loans. Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines have just protected their reserves by devaluing their currencies. But in doing so, they have put even more financial pressure on domestic private borrowers who relied on "stable" exchange rates when they borrowed in dollars and yen. In case you think this doesn't matter to us, remember that a large and rising fraction of our exports goes to these countries.

The Europeans are engaged in protecting themselves from a rematch of World War II. The idea is that in order to keep young Germans from killing young Frenchmen, it is necessary to bind them all together with an inflexible continental monetary system. Only a large organization of experts could have come up with such stupidity. Nevertheless, the best and brightest of Europe are concerned that European Monetary Union won't happen. In truth, disaster will come about if it does happen. Then the problem won't be that young Germans will want to kill young Frenchmen, but that both groups will want to kill old politicians and destroy the artificial, imposed-from-above consensus in the misplaced hope that their prospects will improve.

So—is there a new paradigm of technology and corporate management? Yes. Does it mean that the business cycle is dead and human nature changed? No. Is the world prepared for trouble? Yes, but the trouble that won't happen rather than the trouble that will happen. Will you lose profitable opportunities by getting out of equities now? Yes, but you will have a better chance of preserving your capital in cash than in stocks. Will the United States come through in good shape? Compared to everyone else, yes, but not compared to our fantasies about a blue-skies future. —JOHN DIZARD



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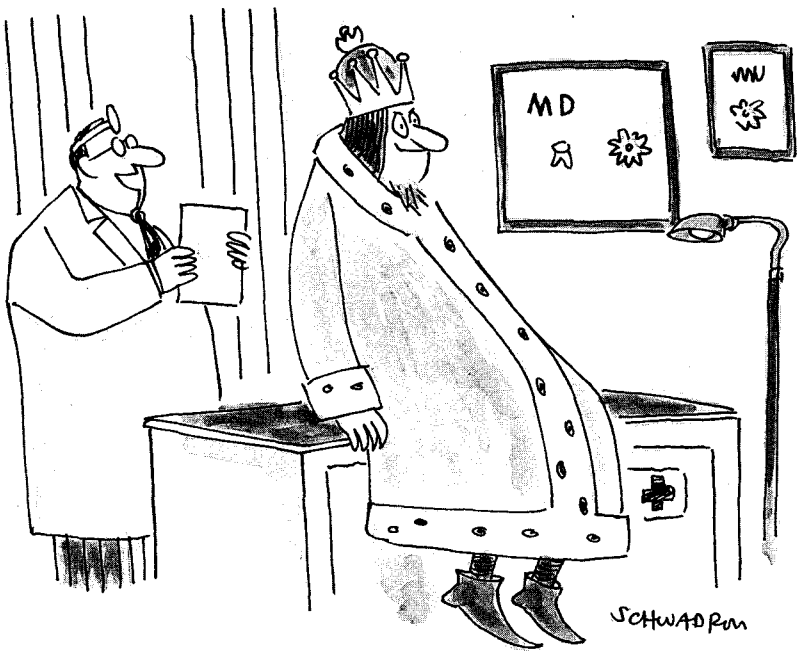
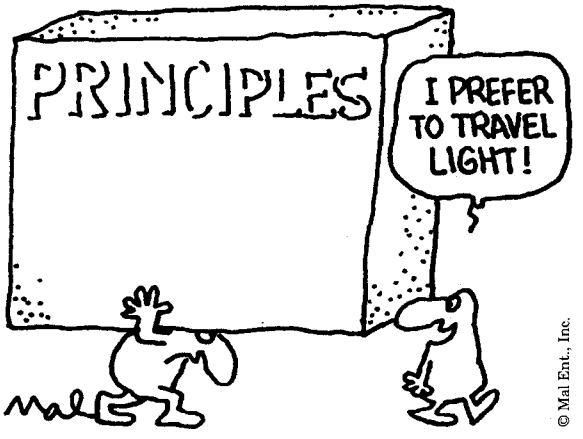


"The test results are back. You are a benign *despot"*



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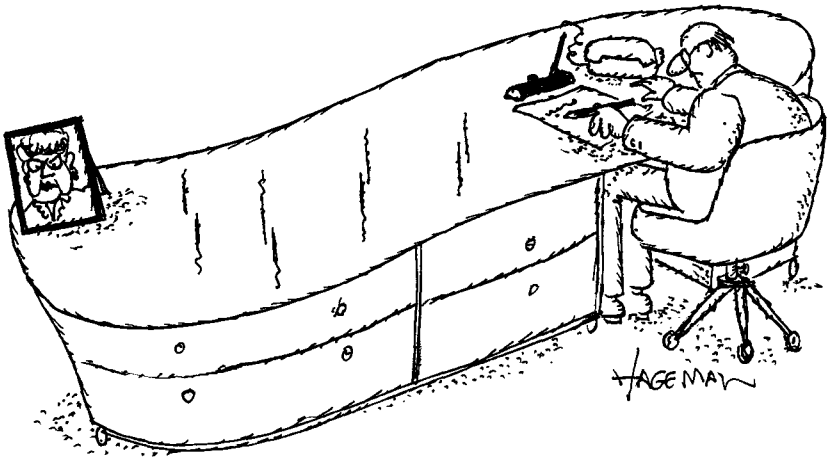
Katharine Hepburn: At 90

"You can
have everything,"
she said in her wise prime,
"but you can't have it all at the
same time."

—GLORIA A. MAXSON



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WE HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR BUT FEAR ITSELF...
ASK NOT WHAT YOUR COUNTRY CAN DO FOR YOU, BUT ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR COUNTRY.
MR. GORBACHEV, TEAR DOWN THAT WALL.
NEVER MET HER.

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The Very Liberal John Paul II

In the battle for the soul of American liberalism, a pope widely considered very conservative has taken a leading role.

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS

WHEN the encyclical *Centesimus Annus* (*The Hundredth Year*) appeared in 1991, some of us viewed it as a vindication of our understanding of Catholic social doctrine. Since then, there have been differences over the encyclical—not so much between liberals (who mostly regarded it as a non-event) and conservatives, as between certain conservatives and those called neoconservatives, the former accusing the latter of hijacking this pontificate, and *Centesimus Annus* in particular, in order to gain magisterial legitimation for what is called democratic capitalism or liberal democracy. The neoconservatives are described as advancing "The Murray Project," referring to the effort of the late Father John Courtney Murray to square Catholic teaching with the American democratic experiment. The conservative critics claim that those of us who are in the Murray tradition are selling out authentic Catholic teaching to a desiccated and desiccating liberalism.

There is a real disagreement here. It is not, or at least not chiefly, a disagreement over Catholic theology. The difference, rather, is that our critics tend to put the worst possible construction upon the liberal tradition, and on the American cultural, legal, and political expression of that tradition. In doing so, I believe they hand an undeserved victory to those who interpret the liberal tradition in ways that we all deplore. With John Courtney Murray, I suggest that our task is to contend for an interpretation of liberalism that is compatible with the fullness of Catholic truth.

There is no doubt that the American experiment is constituted in the liberal tradition. Since we cannot go back to the eighteenth century and reconstitute it on different foundations, we must hope that the foundations on which it is constituted are not those described by Ronald Dworkin, John Rawls, Richard Rorty—and some conservative Catholic thinkers.

Liberalism, needless to say, is a wondrously pliable term. There is the laissez-faire economic liberalism condemned by Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum* in 1891, and also by John Paul II. In America that liberalism goes by the name of libertarianism, and, despite its many talented apologists, it has never acquired many adherents beyond what Russell Kirk called its "chirping sectaries."

The liberalism so fiercely criticized today is not limited to libertarianism. At the hands of the critics, the republican liberalism of virtue and the communitarian liberalism of Tocquevillian civil society come off little better than libertarianism. We can summarize some of the salient points in the indictment offered by the Christian critics of liberalism and modernity (the two terms usually being more or less interchangeable). Whether it be the enchanted G. K. Chesterton, the near-magisterial Alasdair MacIntyre, the caustic George Grant, the swashbuckling Stanley Hauerwas, the daring Oliver O'Donovan, or the melancholic David Schindler, the indictment tends to be much the same.

The first charge is that Christian thinkers have been too ready to trim the Christian message in order to accommodate the ruling cultural paradigm of liberalism. I strongly agree. That, however, is more accurately seen as an indictment of Christian thinkers, not of liberalism. If we are hesitant to assert the fullness of Christian truth in public, the fault is in ourselves. The strident voices of secularized liberalism may have intimidated us, but the fault is with our timidity.

Other points in the indictment of liberalism are variously expressed. It is charged that liberalism is purely procedural. Excluding the consideration of ends, liberalism

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Father Neuhaus is editor-in-chief of First Things, *where an earlier version of this article appeared.*

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claims to be only about means, but in fact disguises its ends in its means. In other words, the claimed "neutrality" of liberalism is anything but neutral. Moreover, it is charged, liberalism is premised upon the fiction of a "social contract" that is, in turn, premised exclusively upon self-interest. Liberalism denies, or at least requires agnosticism about, transcendent truth or divine law, recognizing no higher rule than the self-interested human will.

These liberal dogmas, it is further charged, are inextricably tied to the dynamics of capitalism. Liberal dogma and market dynamics are the mutually reinforcing foundation and end of a social order that is entirely and without remainder in the service of individualistic choices by the sovereign, autonomous, and unencumbered Self.

It is an impressive indictment, and it is supported by impressive evidence. But I would argue that the indictment is an indictment of the *distortions* of liberalism. If that is the case, we are contending for the soul of the liberal tradition.

A PERSONAL word might be in order. In the 1960s I was very much a man of the Left. Not the Left of countercultural drug tripping and generalized hedonism, but the Left exemplified by, for instance, the civil-rights movement led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. In the latter half of the 1960s this began to change with the advent of the debate over what was then called "liberalized" abortion law. By 1967, I was writing about the "two liberalisms"—one, like that earlier civil-rights movement, inclusive of the vulnerable and driven by a transcendent order of justice, the other exclusive and recognizing no law higher than individual willfulness. My argument was that, by embracing the cause of abortion, liberals were abandoning the first liberalism, which has sustained all that is hopeful in the American experiment.

A great chasm has opened between that liberal tradition and what today is called liberalism. That is why some of us are called conservatives. Conservatism that is authentically and constructively *American* conservatism is conservatism in the cause of reappropriating and revitalizing the liberal tradition.

Toward that end, *Centesimus Annus* is an invaluable guide. The document is often described as an encyclical on economics, but it is much more than that. *Centesimus Annus* is about the free society, including economic freedom. While the encyclical must be situated within the larger context of Catholic social teaching, one cannot help being struck by how much it is a reading of "the signs of the time" with specific reference to the world-historical experiences of this century. And, although it is written to and for the universal Church, the Church in each place is invited and obliged to read the encyclical as if it were addressed to its own specific circumstance.

We Americans make no mistake when we think that the American experiment is a major presence in *Centesimus Annus*. After all, the Western democracies, and the United States most particularly, are the historically available alternatives to the socialism that has so miserably failed. More than that, in this pontificate, for the first time, magisterial teaching about modernity, democracy, and human freedom has a stronger reference to the Revolution of 1776 than to the French Revolution of 1789. It is neither chauvinistic nor parochial to read *Centesimus Annus* with particular reference to the American experiment. On the contrary, it is the course of fidelity.

There is no more common criticism of the liberal tradition than that it is premised upon unbridled "individualism." *Centesimus Annus* speaks of the "individual" and even of the "autonomous subject," but most typically refers to the "person." Citing an earlier encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis* (*Redeemer of Mankind*), John Paul writes that "this human person is the primary route that the Church must travel in fulfilling her mission . . . the way traced out by Christ himself, the way that leads invariably through the mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption." He then adds the remarkable statement, "This, and this alone, is the principle which inspires the Church's social doctrine."

This, *and this alone*. He then writes, "The Church has gradually developed that doctrine in a systematic way," above all in the past century. *Very* gradually, we might add without disrespect. In a later encyclical, *Veritatis Splendor* (*The Splendor of Truth*), John Paul pays fulsome tribute to modernity and its development of the understanding of the dignity of the individual and of individual freedom. Individualism is one of the signal achievements of modernity or, if you will, of the liberal tradition. Nor should we deny that this achievement was effected in frequent tension with the Catholic Church. One important reason for such conflict, of course, was that the cause of freedom was perceived as marching under the radically anti-clerical and anti-Christian banners of 1789. It is a signal achievement of this pontificate that it has so clearly replanted the idea of the individual and of freedom in the rich soil of Christian truth from which it had been uprooted.

It is a mistake to pit, as some do pit, modern individualism against a more "organic" Catholic understanding of community. Rather should we enter into a sympathetic liaison with the modern achievement of the idea of the individual, grounding it more firmly in the understanding of the person destined from eternity to eternity for communion with God. The danger of rejecting individualism is that the real-world alternative to individualism is not a Catholic understanding of *communio*—of persons rightly ordered in relation to God and one another—but a falling back into the collectivisms that are the great enemy of the freedom to which we are called. The problem with the present-day distortion of the individual as the autonomous, unencumbered, sovereign Self is not that it is wrong about the awesome dignity of the individual, but that it cuts the self off from the source of that dignity. The first cause of this error, says *Centesimus Annus*, is atheism.

"It is by responding to the call of God contained in the being of things that man becomes aware of his transcendent dignity. Every individual must give this response, which constitutes the apex of his humanity, and no social mechanism or collective subject can substitute for it." The great error both of collectivist determinism and of individualistic license is that their understanding of human freedom is detached from obedience to the truth. In one of the

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most suggestive passages of the encyclical, John Paul writes, "At the heart of every culture lies the attitude a person takes to the greatest mystery: the mystery of God. Different cultures are basically different ways of facing the question of the meaning of personal existence."

This idea is not individualism in the pejorative sense, but it is commensurable with the modern achievement of the idea of the individual. It is commensurable with the constituting ideas of the American experiment, in which the state is understood to be in the service of freedom, and freedom is understood as what the Founders called "ordered liberty"—liberty ordered to the truth. And there are, as the Declaration of Independence declares, "self-evident truths" that ground such freedom and direct it to the transcendent ends of "nature and nature's God."

The theistic references in the Declaration of Independence are not simply crowd-pleasing asides, but are integral to its moral argument.

The theistic references of the Declaration are not, as some present-day commentators claim, simply crowd-pleasing asides but are integral to the moral argument of the document. The American experiment is constituted by a Puritan–Lockean synthesis that in recent decades has been bowdlerized to fit the secularist prejudices of our academic elites. It is imperative that we challenge this version of the founding and take our American history straight.

It will be protested by some that this is mere "civic religion." But we have missed the point of *Centesimus Annus* if we think there is anything "mere" about sustaining a public order that acknowledges the transcendent source and end of human existence. Of course such formal acknowledgment provides only a very thin and attenuated theology, but it creates the condition within which Christians can propose a rich and adequate account of the human story. But that, it is objected, is just the problem: In a liberal society the Church can only propose its truth, putting the gospel in the marketplace as one item among others.

This is a frequently heard objection, and we have to wonder what people mean by it. Are they suggesting that the Church should coerce people to obey the truth? In the encyclical on evangelization, *Redemptoris Missio* (*The Mission of the Redeemer*), the Pope says, "The Church imposes nothing, she only proposes." She would not impose if she could. Authentic faith is of necessity an act of freedom. The Church is to propose—relentlessly, boldly, persuasively, winsomely. If we who are the Church are not doing that, the fault is not with liberalism but with ourselves. Although the Church's message provides a secure grounding for liberalism, liberalism is not the content of the Church's message. It is simply the condition for the Church to invite free persons to live in the *communio* of Christ and His Church, which communion is infinitely deeper, richer, and fuller than the liberal social order—or, for that matter, any social order short of the right ordering of all things in the Kingdom of God.

Few things are more important to the free society than the idea and reality of the limited state. However much the courts and secular intellectuals may have denied it in recent decades, the American order is inexplicable apart from the acknowledgment of a sovereignty higher than the state. As in "one nation under God," meaning a nation under judgment. Christians understand and publicly declare that higher sovereignty in the simple proposition, "Jesus Christ is Lord." It is not necessary for the state to declare that Jesus Christ is Lord. Nor, at least in the American circumstance or in any foreseeable reconfiguration of that circumstance, is it desirable that the state declare that Jesus Christ is Lord. The role of the limited state is to respect the political sovereignty of the people who acknowledge a sovereignty higher than their own. The lordship of Christ denotes the highest sovereignty by which the state is limited, and the proclamation of that lordship is the most important political contribution of the Church. In a democratic society that has been effectively evangelized, citizens do not ask the state to confess the lordship of Christ. Their only demand is that the state be respectful of the fact that a majority of its citizens confess the lordship of Christ.

The Church also makes an invaluable political contribution by insisting upon the limits of politics. The great danger, says *Centesimus Annus*, is that "politics becomes a 'secular religion' which operates under the illusion of creating paradise in this world. But no political society . . . can ever be confused with the Kingdom of God." The power of grace "penetrates" the political order, especially as the laity take the lead in the exercise of Christian public responsibility, but there can be no pretensions that earthly politics will create the final right order for which our hearts yearn.

As in the liberal order the ambitions of the state are checked by the democratic assertion of a higher sovereignty and by the limits of politics itself, so those ambitions are checked by diverse "sovereignties" within society. With Leo XIII, John Paul II declares that "the individual, the family, and society are prior to the State." The state exists to serve and protect individuals and institutions that have priority. Human persons and what I have elsewhere described as the mediating institutions of society "enjoy their own spheres of autonomy and sovereignty," according to *Centesimus Annus*. These spheres of sovereignty are smaller than the state, but they are not lower than the state.

THE striking modernity of the encyclical's argument is evident also in its understanding of the state. Unlike the case of earlier formulations, the state is not situated within a hierarchy of authorities, descending from the rule of God to the rule of the lord of the manor. The argument of *Centesimus Annus* is profoundly democratic. Christ is sovereign over all, and that sovereignty is asserted by those who acknowledge the sovereignty of Christ. The unlimited state, whether based on Marxist atheism or the engineering designs of Enlightenment rationalism, aspires to totalitarian control. "Thus there is a denial of the supreme insight concerning man's true greatness, his transcendence in respect to earthly realities, the contradiction in his heart between the desire for the fullness of what is good and his own inability to attain it, and, above all, the

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need for salvation which results from this situation." The limited state is kept limited by the democratic assertion of the transcendent aspiration of the human heart.

In this connection, John Paul infuses the doctrine of "subsidiarity" with new vitality by the use of a most suggestive phrase, "the subjectivity of society." "The social nature of man . . . is realized in various intermediary groups, beginning with the family and including economic, social, political, and cultural groups which stem from human nature itself and have their own autonomy, always with a view to the common good." In the free society, the state is one institution, one player, among others. It is an indispensable player in its service to all the other players, but it is subject to the subjectivity of society, and the subjectivity of society consists in free persons and in free persons in community living in obedience to God and solidarity with one another. There is in *Centesimus Annus* and in other writings of this pontificate, I believe, a fresh and compelling theory of democracy that awaits systematic development by the next generation.

There must be a cultivated skepticism about the state if it is to be kept limited. "To that end, it is preferable that each power be balanced by other powers and by other spheres of responsibility which keep it within proper bounds." Skepticism regarding the power of the state does not mean, however, skepticism about the purposes that the state is to serve. Quite the opposite is the case. Only when those purposes are clearly and unambiguously asserted can the state be held accountable. Section 45 of *Centesimus Annus* clearly and unambiguously challenges the point at which present-day liberalism has most severely distorted the meaning of democracy in the liberal tradition. Here is the crucial paragraph:

> Nowadays there is a tendency to claim that agnosticism and skeptical relativism are the philosophy and the basic attitude which correspond to democratic forms of political life. Those who are convinced that they know the truth and firmly adhere to it are considered unreliable from a democratic point of view, since they do not accept that the truth is determined by the majority, or that it is subject to variation according to different political trends. It must be observed in this regard that if there is no ultimate truth to guide and direct political activity, then ideas and convictions can easily be manipulated for reasons of power. As history demonstrates, a democracy without values easily turns into open or thinly disguised totalitarianism.

Liberalism's dogmatic insistence upon agnosticism in public discourse and decision-making has created what I have called "the naked public square." People who, like the Founders, hold certain truths to be self-evident are today "considered unreliable from a democratic point of view." In a usurpation of power that indeed threatens a "thinly disguised totalitarianism," the courts have presumed to declare that the separation of church and state means the separation of religion and religiously grounded morality from public life, which means the separation of the deepest convictions of the people from politics, which means the end of democracy and, in fact, the end of politics. Thank God, we are not there yet. But it is the direction in which the United States has been moving these last several decades, and it is the real and present danger requiring those of us called conservatives to rally to the defense of the liberal tradition.

In contending for the soul of liberalism, we must be sympathetically alert to some of our fellow citizens who honestly believe that any appeal to transcendent truth poses the threat of theocracy. *Centesimus Annus* again:

> Nor does the Church close her eyes to the danger of fanaticism or fundamentalism among those who, in the name of an ideology which purports to be scientific or religious, claim the right to impose on others their own concept of what is true and good. Christian truth is not of this kind. Since it is not an ideology, the Christian faith does not presume to imprison changing sociopolitical realities in a rigid schema, and it recognizes that human life is realized in history in conditions that are diverse and imperfect. Furthermore, in constantly reaffirming the transcendent dignity of the person, the Church's method is always that of respect for freedom.

Let it be candidly admitted that that has not always appeared to be the Church's method. In *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (*As the Third Millennium Nears*) and on many other occasions, the Pope has repeatedly called upon Christians to acknowledge the ways in which, individually and corporately, they have failed to respect the dignity and freedom of others. That acknowledgment must, however, be joined to two other propositions. First: When, in the name of democracy, transcendent truth is excluded from the public square, the result is "open or thinly disguised totalitarianism." Second: Democratic totalitarianism, which recognizes no higher truth than majority rule, creates a treacherously dangerous circumstance for minorities.

I BEGAN with some comments on *Centesimus Annus* and what some call "The Murray Project." Nobody should try to usurp the authority of magisterial documents in order to advance his own partisan arguments. In no way should the encyclical be interpreted as an unqualified affirmation of the American experiment. In many ways, it is a searing criticism of what that experiment has become under the influence of present-day liberalisms. Yet I do believe *Centesimus Annus* is commensurate with the American liberal tradition, and in critical continuity with the great work of John Courtney Murray. And I hope, too, that that is the case, for we have not the luxury of imagining the reconstitution of this social and political order on foundations other than the liberal tradition.

As sympathetic as we may be to some of the determined critics of liberalism, we do well to remind ourselves that all temporal orders short of the Kingdom of God are profoundly unsatisfactory. When we survey the depredations and ravages of our social, political, and religious circumstance, it is tempting to look for someone or something to blame. It is easy to say, "Liberalism made us do it." But liberalism is freedom, and what we do with freedom is charged to our account. For American Christians, and for Catholics in particular, nothing has been done wrong that could not have been done differently. Amidst the depredations and ravages of an American experiment that once exalted the human spirit, and may do so again, *Centesimus Annus* invites us to reappropriate and rebuild the liberal tradition. □

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PRINCE OF FASHION

Design for Dying

Gianni Versace's murder in Miami's South Beach was cut from the same cloth as underclass-chic.

JONATHAN FOREMAN

A GREAT deal of pretentious rubbish has been written about Gianni Versace since his murder last week. His brutal slaying on the doorstep of his own house was, to be sure, a shocking and tragic thing, a terrible blow to his family and all those his life had touched. It has all sorts of dismaying implications for our culture. And it will no doubt darken the reputation of this country in general—and Miami in particular—as places where no one is safe from men with guns.

But this is no excuse for some of the hyperbole that has bubbled up in the media. The last two weeks also saw the deaths of Arthur Liman, François Furet, and Jimmy Stewart—as well as many others who could be said to have made far greater contributions to the common weal than Gianni Versace. Of course Versace was relatively young. And he was also *murdered*, and even the best-ordered societies have a morbid fascination with murder.

But treating Versace as if he were a combination of Picasso, John F. Kennedy, and Mother Teresa is absurd. And worse than absurd. It reflects the distorted values of the celebrity culture that may well have been what sealed his fate. For while we don't know for sure that Versace was the victim of suspected "spree killer" Andrew Cunanan, it seems likely that he was gunned down because of his fame—and because, unlike so many other celebrities, he chose not to live like a hunted man behind a screen of bodyguards.

According to Richard Martin, the curator of the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (writing in the *Los Angeles Times*), "Versace was the first post-Freudian fashion designer unencumbered by any reticence or guilt about sexuality." This is intended as high praise and is nonsense on several levels. For a start, it is not true. For all that his homosexuality was "open," Versace's clothes for women were far more outrageous than his designs for men, and Versace himself wore only the most respectable of his own creations. As for Freud, Mr. Martin—like so many people today—seems to confuse him with some 1960s hippy who favored letting it all hang out. Freud actually thought that sexual reticence and guilt were a necessary part of a civilized society. Were he reading the papers today he would almost certainly be horrified to be considered responsible for Versace's design ethos or the South Beach party scene.

Mr. Martin goes on to explain how Versace took the trend of merging "the street" with high fashion to its logical conclusion. "By the 1980s and '90s, there was one figure standing untouched in the street: the streetwalker. And she became the heroine of Versace's brilliant designs." Thus, Mr. Martin says, Versace created in fashion "what Toulouse-Lautrec had done for the demimonde in the 1880s and 1890s." But Toulouse-Lautrec's whores are some of the saddest creatures in nineteenth-century painting. And there is a big difference between Toulouse-Lautrec's social realism and Versace's slumming.

The emperor Caligula forced the wives of the Roman aristocracy to sell their bodies to the public. Versace persuaded wealthy and beautiful women to pay large sums of money to pretend to be hookers. One has to ask what kind of milieu this is in which people affect to believe that the pathetic figure of the streetwalker, the most victimized, desperate, humiliated order of prostitute, is *glamorous* and *sexy*. People call the fashion world superficial, yet it is not superficiality that is behind such a disgusting sentiment, so chilling in its callousness. It is an arrogant elitism. Compared to several of his peers, Versace's sins in this regard were relatively mild. But the whole spectacle of society women costumed as hustlers is enough to make you wonder where all the Marxist revolutionaries have gone.

Versace was a cultivated, brilliant man, by all accounts loyal, decent, and blessed with a talent for friendship. He

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was a generous, hard-working, relatively solid citizen who demonstrated that a family business can thrive in a global economy. But he also epitomized some of the faults of the industry in which he worked, an industry which has recently promoted whore chic, pedophile chic, and junkie chic.

Anyone who criticizes the fashion world for its excess or warped aesthetics is tarred as a humorless killjoy, who doesn't "get" that it is all a game. Why shouldn't fashion be self-indulgent and fun? its defenders ask (as if only tawdriness and trash were fun). But fashion's champions also consider it to be a serious art-form, and they celebrate its far-ranging influence. And if they are right, then the kinds of messages that fashion sends really do matter. They matter not just because young girls will starve themselves to achieve the waif look and because inner-city teenagers really will fight over designer shirts, but because the whole tone of a society is set by the people at the top.

It is no coincidence that the descent into chic sleaze by a large section of the fashion business has come at a time when that world is closer to popular music and the entertainment industry than ever before. Versace himself treasured relationships with older rock acts like Elton John, most of whom are quaintly bland and old-fashioned by current American standards, but still the epitome of "cool" to Europeans, with their notoriously tin ear for rock 'n' roll. It is not clear if Versace brought the peculiar *nouveaux riches* of pop music into fashion or if their newfound interest in high fashion created the conditions for his rise to prominence. Certainly they sat in the front rows of his shows.

One must remember that even after twenty or thirty years of amazing wealth, most rock stars feel a little uneasy playing *haut-bourgeois*. And more than any other designer, Versace enabled pop-culture people to feel at home in the arena of high fashion. His relative outrageousness was certainly one key to his success with them. (It also helped that he befriended and flattered them—with his beautiful houses and libraries and facility for languages he probably really seemed to them like a "Renaissance prince.") The whole oh-so-naughty, on-the-edge ethos of Versace had enormous appeal for moneyed former "rebels" and their jet-set friends. It was decadent, but it was fundamentally safe. Versace's

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clients could play the rich person's game of fashion-slumming because they knew that no one would ever mistake them for real streetwalkers. Behind their velvet ropes and security men and electric fences the real underworld could not touch them.

Like his clients, Versace lived according to the assumption of the decadent rich that the world is safe for slumming. And it is, but only if, like the Madonnas and the Sylvester Stallones, you live at addresses unavailable to the general public, surrounded by bodyguards. (They know that if you are a celebrity in this country you have to live as the wealthy do in Colombia or Venezuela.) But, just as everyone knew that John Lennon lived at the Dakota in Manhattan, everyone in South Beach knew that Versace lived at the Casa Casuerina, the biggest house on the beachfront. It must have been easy for his killer to find him, follow his routine, and then to gun him down in broad daylight like a political assassin in Bogotá or Caracas.

This is not to say that his terrible fate was in any way Versace's fault. Who after all can blame him for wanting to lead a normal life, dropping into the café every morning to read the paper over a croissant? In retrospect he was too trusting, most likely because he was a foreigner: both Versace and Lennon loved the freedom of America but grew up in the bosom of societies that are much safer for the prominent and successful. In an age where fame is a more valuable currency than ever before, one implication of this horrible murder may be that there is no city left where celebrities may live with the freedom of ordinary people.

Another is that privileged fashion folk who, like Versace, feel the need to glamorize or make a game of prostitution or rape or heroin addiction are dangerously insulated from the real world. These dark currents are amusing only to the extent that they are distant abstractions—only if you think you are so wealthy, powerful, and famous they cannot touch you. But no one is so wealthy or powerful or famous, as Gianni Versace discovered at the cost of his life. □

State 'Hood

Bringing Puerto Rico into the Union would in some ways help Puerto Rico, but in no way help the Union.

JORGE AMSELLE

IT is extremely rare for the Speaker of the House to actively co-sponsor legislation. Yet Speaker Gingrich, Majority Whip Tom DeLay, and 23 other Republican members have signed on to HR-856, which would begin the process to make Puerto Rico our 51st state. Introduced by Rep. Don Young (R., Ark.), the bill would require the island to hold a referendum in 1998 with three options: continued commonwealth, statehood, or independence. The referendum would also be held at least once every ten years until either statehood or independence received a majority vote.

That's a bare majority—whereas Alaska became a state with the support of 83 per cent of its population; Hawaii, with 94 per cent. Over the years, Puerto Rico has had two referenda on the status question. In 1967 commonwealth status won with a large margin. The second referendum, in 1993, resulted in a vote that was 48.6 per cent for continued commonwealth, 46.3 per cent for statehood, and 4.4 per cent for independence. Since the last two options are the only permanent choices, there is little doubt regarding the eventual result. Once the statehood option succeeds, Congress would be required to vote on statehood every two years until it was approved.

Yet making Puerto Rico a state not only is a monumentally bad idea, but undermines everything the Republican Congress has sought to do. A state of Puerto Rico would have two senators and at least six congressmen, all hostile to a GOP agenda of spending cuts. The fervor of statehood proponents is driven by one thing: cash. Over half the island's population currently qualify for food stamps or other forms of public assistance. Statehood would eliminate current caps on welfare, imposed by Congress, and make the island eligible for $3 billion in additional public assistance. A Puerto Rican state would no longer be exempt from the federal income tax—but this would actually result in a net loss to the U.S. Treasury, as many islanders would be eligible for cash payments in the form of the Earned Income Tax Credit.

When Carlos Romero-Barcelo—the current congressional delegate for Puerto Rico, former governor, and an ardent supporter of statehood—titled his 1978 book *Statehood Is for the Poor*, he wasn't kidding. The bottom line of this small book may be found on page 87: "The State of Puerto Rico will qualify for a great deal of federal aid money. . . . Puerto Rico's per capita contribution to the federal treasury, were we a state, would come to less than that of any other state in the Union. At the same time the per capita benefits we'd reap from federal aid programs would be greater than those of any other state in the Union. On top of all this we'd also have seven or eight Puerto Ricans serving as full voting members of Congress, working up in Washington at all times to help draft and pass new and improved social welfare legislation." Since the House is limited by law to 435 representatives, Puerto Rico's new congressional delegation would also end up diluting the current representation of several states.

Increased welfare is an especially enticing ploy given that Congress last year repealed the Territories and Possessions Corporate Tax Exemptions Act (IRS Section 936), eliminating, with a ten-year transition period, the tax-exempt status of businesses based on the island. Tax exemption for businesses has been one of the strongest reasons to maintain commonwealth status. It is often credited with providing one of every three jobs on the island, which currently suffers from an unemployment rate of close to 20 per cent. Even without a jump in unemployment Puerto Rico would become our poorest state, with half the median income of Mississippi. State-

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hood would also guarantee U.S. citizenship—which Puerto Ricans currently have on a statutory basis—as a permanent birthright.

For many people on the island, however, their greatest concern is maintaining their language and culture. Statehood would serve to create our own tropical Quebec. Over 80 per cent of islanders do not speak or understand English. Puerto Rico may be officially bilingual now, but in reality it is a Spanish-speaking nation, and between 1990 and 1993 Spanish was the only official language. The attitude toward English on the island can be best described as hostile.

Many islanders would be eligible for cash payments in the form of the Earned Income Tax Credit.

When Victor Fajardo, Puerto Rico's education secretary, proposed that English be made the second language of instruction earlier this year, teachers unions protested, calling it cultural suicide. One teacher, Digna Irizarry, told the *New York Times*, "I will refuse to teach in English." Even Secretary Fajardo was quoted by the *Times* as saying that "we agree that English will always be the second language of education." According to this same *Times* article, "fully 90 per cent of the island's 650,000 public-school students lack basic English skills by the time they graduate." The fact is that the top priority of Puerto Rican schools is to teach children Spanish, not English.

Opposition to both English and statehood runs high among cultural leaders in Puerto Rico. Renan Soto Soto, president of the Puerto Rican Federation of Teachers, testified against the restoration of official bilingualism in 1993, claiming, "Since that Sunday, July 25 of 1898, when we were invaded by the North Americans, Puerto Rico has been the victim of constant cultural aggression and intense publicity directed toward eliminating our language, Spanish." Ricardo E. Alegria, founder of the Center for the Advanced Study of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, told the *New York Times Magazine*: "We weren't Alaska, Hawaii, Arizona, or New Mexico. We weren't some sparsely settled frontier. We were a nation when the United States arrived. The United States could never eliminate Spanish here. There will always be ethnic tension here if they try to make us a state."

Rep. Young's bill does have some English requirements; for example, all Federal Government and judicial affairs would have to be conducted in English. However, there is no similar requirement of state courts and government. According to Jim Boulet, executive director of English First, "I can easily foresee a situation in which non-Spanish-speaking American citizens would be forced to hire their own translator in order to receive justice in an American court of law in a state of Puerto Rico."

Even if Congress works through all these concerns there is one small issue which remains: terrorism. On March 1, 1954, four armed pro-independence Puerto Rican terrorists opened fire from the visitors' gallery in the House of Representatives, wounding five members of Congress. Only four years earlier two like-minded terrorists had attempted to assassinate President Truman; they did succeed in killing a policeman.

Today's Puerto Rican *Independistas* are just as violent and have had more than forty years to improve their aim. Puerto Rico is the leading source of domestic terrorism in the United States and a far greater threat than militias, neo-Nazis, or Ku Klux Klan. One group alone, the *Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional* (FALN), has been responsible for more than 120 bombings since the mid Seventies both on the island and in Chicago, New York City, and Washington, D.C.

Other Puerto Rican terrorist groups include *Comandos Armados de Liberación* (CAL); *Movimiento Independista Revolucionario Armado* (MIR); *Fuerzas Armadas de Resistencia Popular* (FARP); *Comandos Revolucionarios del Pueblo* (CRP); and *Los Macheteros* (literally, the machete wielders). They have been responsible for attacks on military installations (including the destruction of several National Guard fighter jets worth over $50 million), federal buildings (including a rocket attack on the FBI offices in San Juan), and armed robbery of over $7 million to finance their criminal activity. Carlos Ayes, a suspect who was later acquitted in this robbery, told the *New York Times Magazine* in 1990 that "Statehood will mean war. If the United States wants its very own Northern Ireland let them continue this farce."

The benefits statehood would bring Puerto Rico are clear. What Congress has failed to show is the benefit to the rest of the United States. In fact, Congress might be better occupied discussing the ceding of Puerto Rico back to Spain. □

NATO, Go East

As NATO spreads to the East, Russia may decide to look eastward as well.

IRA STRAUS

As NATO expansion moves ahead after the Madrid Summit, the issue of how to deal with Russia will not vanish. Whether or not the expansion into Central Europe succeeds—but especially if it does—it is vital to develop a relationship with Russia for the long run.

Russia is bitterly opposed to the expansion of a NATO from which Russia is permanently excluded. Why? Boris Berezovsky, Deputy Secretary of the Russian Security Council and the most uninhibited of the new Westernizers, explains that such exclusion would "separate Russia from Europe and in effect put it in geopolitical opposition to the family of Western democracies." This in turn would shape Russia's identity in an anti-Western way—perhaps for generations.

Mr. Straus, U.S. Coordinator of the Committee on Eastern Europe and Russia in NATO, can be reached at 703-521-5759.

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Russians face a geopolitical nightmare when they look at Western maps that color in the NATO countries as full members, shade in the small Eastern European countries as candidates, and leave Russia blank as an outsider. And geopolitical nightmares move people to react. When a power is spreading on the map, others do not accept its assurances blindly. They start looking for allies to balance it. And Russia has been doing just that.

Russia and China do not need deep ideological sympathy; they need only to join hands in making trouble.

Even before last December's decision to expand NATO, Russian liberals warned that it would lead to a realignment of Russia with China—the one and only development that could threaten the West's global leadership. But the West dismissed this; indeed, when Russia later agreed to negotiate a charter with NATO, Westerners argued that Russia was now accommodating to the reality of NATO expansion. Then in April, the Russia–China alignment was duly proclaimed.

Western commentators consoled themselves by saying that this alignment would not go as deep as the one in the 1950s. They missed the point. If theirs is merely a negative alignment against Western leadership, Russia and China do not need deep ideological sympathy. They need only to join hands in making trouble, selling arms, supporting each other against Western pressures—and supporting other troublemaking countries.

Unsurprisingly, Communists and Zhirinovsky supporters in the Duma denounced NATO expansion in unqualified terms. The government and centrist parties—Viktor Chernomyrdin's NDR and Grigory Yavlinsky's Yabloko—denounced it no less bitterly; for them it was a betrayal. Their denunciation, however, was highly qualified: they objected to expansion as long as it excluded Russia while moving NATO military structures eastward. Their preferred alternative was to include Russia in NATO.

Yeltsin himself had come out for joining NATO back in 1991. With no response from the West, this became a liability for him. Still, in 1996, Ivan Rybkin—Lebed's replacement as secretary of the Security Council—revived the idea, stating that Russia should join NATO as a political member. Rybkin was supported by Yuri Baturin, secretary of the Defense Council, and in 1997 by Viktor Chernomyrdin, the prime minister, who said Russia was prepared to sign the necessary agreements for joining the North Atlantic Council. With that, practically the entire Russian leadership had come out for joining NATO—except for Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov, who told Rybkin to shut up. The West proceeded to negotiate with Primakov over his proposal for an external Russia–NATO link that would constrict NATO. This validated Primakov and hung the Westernizers out to dry.

One problem with the NATO–Russia Founding Act is that it provides an external consultative link but not a home for a new Russian identity. At best it is a first step that could be eventually replaced with the kind of link that could really anchor Russia to the West. If, however, NATO were to minimize the effects of the Founding Act while expanding to the East, the actual effect would be to expel Russia from the discussion in Europe.

Ironically, much of the criticism of the Founding Act in the West is that it gives Russia too much say. We can agree that it is cumbersome, and that it sometimes places Russia on a par with all of NATO. But these were the predictable consequences of negotiating an external arm's-length relationship (insisted on by those who feared Russia). It would be nice to think that, when it proves unwieldy in practice, NATO might take the practical step of inviting Russia to come as an observer to actual NATO meetings and skip the separate ones.

The choices are so stark because NATO is a military alliance. A European great power is either in it or out. Russia in NATO could add to NATO's power; Russia outside NATO must try to constrain it.

What is especially significant, however, is the mixed reaction of the non-European world to the new tensions between Russia and the West. Japan, which is largely integrated with the West, does not hope for a renewal of conflict among the white powers—even though that might give Japan more room to maneuver. The *Tokyo Shimbun* last December lamented the problems between Russia and NATO as a danger to international security, and concluded that "the final and only resolution may be the inclusion of Russia in NATO."

In the Southern tier, commentary has been more caustic. Criticisms of the impending new cold war have been coupled with strategies for exploiting it. The Chinese line has paralleled the Primakov line: against unipolarism, against U.S. global leadership via NATO, and in favor of reversion to a multipolar balance of power. Primakov and the Chinese leadership have for some time been encouraging one another in developing this dangerous doctrine.

But it is a doctrine that fits Chinese nationalist interests far better than Russian ones. Many Russians have been nervous about serving the Chinese interest in fragmenting the world order. But Primakov had a trump card: the pressure of NATO expansion minus Russia. He duly got his rapprochement with China, with a declaration in favor of a "new world order" of "multipolarism."

DIFFERENCES between Russia and the West are undermining Western influence not only on Russia itself but also on China, just as pre-1945 differences between Germany and the West used to undermine Western influence on Russia. As seen from China, Russia is a Western country, and its division from other Western powers only serves to weaken and discredit the West. It makes clear that there is no reliable leading group in the world. This encourages China to follow a separate path.

Indeed, multipolarism breeds as well as reflects a multiplication of power centers with separate spiritual/strategic orientations. From China, the effects go on to India. In the *Pioneer* this January, a strategic-affairs analyst, Brahma Chellaney, saw the renewal of conflict between Russia and the West as providing moral cover for other countries to stake out their own power positions. He gloated over the opportunity for India

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to become a nuclear power outright:

> The nation can no longer put off critical decision-making on its security options. One cold war ended between 1989–91, another is set to begin in 1997 as the U.S.-led NATO expands to the doorsteps of Russia. . . . India should exploit the NATO-expansion summit to unveil its own nuclear security plans. . . . India should ready its prototype warheads and delivery vehicles. . . . By the end of 1997, India's nuclear ambivalence should have dissipated.

Here, again, we see the effect of a Russia–West split in undermining Northern leadership of the world, spurring nuclear proliferation as well as a proliferation of moral orientations. This is where multipolarism leads. There is no reason to think it stops at India. What has been articulated in India must also be in the minds of proliferation-minded strategists in many another country.

Multipolarism is a contagious disease. When the multipolar new world order was proclaimed by Russia and China this April, it was welcomed not only in India and Iran, but also in Pakistan, Egypt, and Singapore. In each of these countries, leading newspapers bemoaned the unipolar domination of the world since 1991 by the West. They all approved the Russia-China alignment as something that could give more weight to their own nations and curb American arrogance.

Interestingly, they all took unipolarism seriously—as a fact, and as a problem for themselves. They took it for granted that America, as the core of the Western "unipole," if I may so call it, was serious about unipolarism. It was quite inconceivable to them that America could proceed without any plans for unipolarity, or be unaware of its unipolar position—or that America's thinkers would be wasting their time talking about multipolarism or "American decline" as if it were the present reality. For them, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns was being disingenuous when he claimed to be happy with the Russo–Chinese rapprochement.

While holding that Western policy was deliberately unipolarist, *The Times of India* still argued this April that a "multipolar world is inevitable," thanks to the spread of nuclear weapons, the growth of regional powers, and the willingness of Russia and China to "proclaim a strategic partnership and counter the doctrine of unipolarity with multipolarity."

The *Hindustan Times* welcomed "Moscow's proposal to build a quadrangular axis with China, India, and Iran." Pakistan's *Dawn* welcomed China and Russia's "working together in the face of Western hegemonic tendencies."

Egypt's *Al Ahram* noted widespread tendencies to "reject American hegemony and the unipolar order." To make multipolarism triumphant, it suggested that it would be enough for Russia and China "to gather the necessary mobilization of regional powers" by "challenging American hegemony over the world at the UN Security Council."

As these comments show, degeneration toward multipolarism is already in a seriously advanced condition. The Russia–China declaration marked an entire stage of degeneration. The Brazilian *Folha de Sāu Paulo* summed it up as a "signal" of the end of the post–Cold War period and "the emergence of a new scenario in international politics."

Be that as it may, unipolarity is still the main reality of the world. The trans-Atlantic "unipole" has been growing economically ever since the discovery of America, democratizing ever since the Enlightenment, and uniting ever since the end of the nineteenth century, when the Atlantic idea was revived in movements for English-Speaking Union and Atlantic Union. Since then, the unipole has grown stronger with each new generation and incorporated former enemies after each conflict. In the world wars, it incorporated France. In its Cold War generation, it incorporated Germany, Italy, and Japan. With the collapse of its Cold War enemy, the Soviet Union, it became by default the core of a unipolar world. As it enters its fourth generation, the question is not whether a unipole exists, but whether it will render its unipolar position secure by incorporating again its main former enemy-power, Russia, thereby gaining a long-sustainable margin over all competitors. Or whether it will instead await a revival of counterposed poles of power and influence.

The very fact that Russia signed the Founding Act, with its paper pledges of consultation, was an expression of the attractive power of the unipole. At the same time, we should not overestimate the role of paper. It took more than paper to integrate Germany and Japan into the Western unipol after 1947. Sober voices in NATO are now saying that the Founding Act has to be made to work. If this is done in a serious way, unipolarity may yet emerge stronger than ever before.

The choice of which world system we will live in is before us. If we expand NATO in a way that truly engages Russia, we will have a shot at a sustainable unipolarity—a world that is based concentrically on the North/West/America, and that is capable of drawing other countries in as they mature economically and democratically. But if we expand in a way that keeps Russia permanently on the outside, we will slip back into multipolarity—a world in which the dangers of the Cold War have metastasized into a chaotic balance of opposing nuclear powers.

A menu for strategic collaboration might include:

—cooperation against Taliban in Afghanistan;

—Western realignment away from Pakistan toward India;

—Russian realignment away from China—from multipolarist ideology and from deliberately arming emerging powers;

—cooperation in strategic defense;

—replacement of mutual deterrence with joint nuclear programming in relation to potential dangers from terrorists, Islamists, and China;

—a standing invitation to Russia to come to North Atlantic Council meetings as an observer, with a "voice not a veto," instead of always holding separate meetings with Russia

—the development for the longer term of a procedure for Russia to have a vote in NATO that will be less than a veto, but more than just a voice;

—the eventual extension of NATO membership to Russia at the same time as to the Baltic states or Ukraine.

A menu of such a scope—with whatever variations of the specific points—is what is needed for consolidation of Western unipolarism. If the current agenda of the West falls far short of this, then it is failing to serve the fundamental interests of the West. □

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Pot Shots

Governmental resistance to the medical marijuana represents a triumph of ideology over science.

JACOB SULLUM

IN August 1996, two months after Proposition 215 qualified for the California ballot, drug czar Barry McCaffrey offered his first public assessment of the medical-marijuana initiative. "There is not a shred of scientific evidence that shows that smoked marijuana is useful or needed," he said. "This is not science. This is not medicine. This is a cruel hoax that sounds more like something out of a Cheech and Chong show."

That November the initiative passed with 65 per cent of the vote, and on December 30, McCaffrey appeared at a press conference with Attorney General Janet Reno and Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala. Posing as defenders of science and responsible medicine, they threatened doctors who recommended marijuana to their patients with loss of prescribing privileges, exclusion from Medicare and Medicaid, and criminal prosecution. Asked whether there was "any evidence . . . that marijuana is useful in a medical situation," McCaffrey replied, "No, none at all. There are hundreds of studies that indicate it isn't."

A week after that comment, McCaffrey announced that his Office of National Drug Control Policy would ask the Institute of Medicine, a branch of the National Academy of Sciences, to review the evidence of marijuana's medical utility. The government would give the IOM 18 months and $1 million to prepare its report—a lot of time and money to examine evidence that McCaffrey had insisted did not exist.

Even before he announced the research review, it was clear to anyone familiar with the subject that McCaffrey had been lying—or, to be charitable, that he was inexcusably ignorant about an issue concerning which he was not only pontificating but making policy. In a 1995 interview with *The Journal of the International Hemp Association*, the government's leading marijuana expert, Mahmoud El Sohly, said, "There is no question about the use of cannabis for certain conditions. It does have a history. It does have utility. To suggest otherwise is not science. It is not medicine. It is politics." Having portrayed marijuana as inherently evil, drug-warriors like McCaffrey are afraid to admit that it might be good for anything.

As McCaffrey should have known, people have been using marijuana as a medicine for thousands of years, beginning in China, India, and the Middle East. The plant's therapeutic potential became known in Western countries during the nineteenth century. From 1840 to 1900, more than a hundred articles on cannabis appeared in European and American medical journals, recommending it as an appetite stimulant, muscle relaxant, painkiller, sedative, and anti-convulsant.

With the popularization of aspirin and injectable opiates, the use of cannabis preparations declined. Nevertheless, when the Marihuana Tax Act, aimed at discouraging recreational use, was proposed in 1937, the American Medical Association testified against it, arguing that the law would also impede medical applications. The AMA was right. The paperwork required by the act, combined with federal anti-diversion regulations, made the medical use of marijuana extremely burdensome, and in 1941 the drug was removed from the United States Pharmacopeia and National Formulary.

As the recreational use of marijuana rose in the 1960s and '70s, so did interest in its potential as a medicine. Cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy found that marijuana relieved their nausea and enabled them to eat. Research showed that marijuana reduced the intraocular pressure that can lead to blindness in glaucoma patients. Migraine sufferers found relief from their headaches, and victims of spinal injuries, multiple sclerosis, and epilepsy reported that marijuana seemed to control their spasms.

Just when Americans were rediscovering the therapeutic properties of marijuana, Congress was making it impossible to obtain marijuana legally. The Controlled Substances Act of 1970 classified marijuana as a Schedule I drug (along with heroin), signifying "a high potential for abuse," "no currently accepted medical use," and "a lack of accepted safety for use . . . under medical supervision." By contrast, both cocaine and morphine are Schedule II drugs, meaning they can be prescribed despite their potential for abuse.

IN 1972 the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws petitioned the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (the Drug Enforcement Administration's predecessor) to reclassify marijuana as a Schedule II substance. The ensuing legal battle dragged on for two decades. In 1988, after two years of hearings, the DEA's chief administrative-law judge, Francis L. Young, concluded that backing by a "significant minority" of doctors had established marijuana's "currently accepted medical use." And since "marijuana, in its natural form, is one of the safest therapeutically active substances known to man," he said, "[o]ne must reasonably conclude that there is accepted safety for use of marijuana under medical supervision." He recommended that the DEA grant NORML's petition to reschedule the drug. DEA Administrator John Lawn rejected Young's findings and, presaging McCaffrey's reaction to Prop. 215, said supporters of medical marijuana were perpetrating a "dangerous and cruel hoax."

If so, it's a hoax that has tricked a lot of respectable people. Since 1978, 34 states and the District of Columbia have adopted legislation approving the medical use of marijuana for certain condi-

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tions. Because of the federal prohibition, most of these laws had little practical effect, though research programs in seven states provided marijuana to several hundred patients in the late 1970s and early '80s. Until 1991, the Federal Government itself accepted, under its "compassionate use" program, applications from patients seeking medical marijuana, eight of whom continue to receive legal cannabis. After it became clear that the government would be inundated with requests from AIDS patients (who, like cancer patients, had found that marijuana restored their appetites), the Bush Administration closed the program to new applicants, deciding that it had sent "the wrong message."

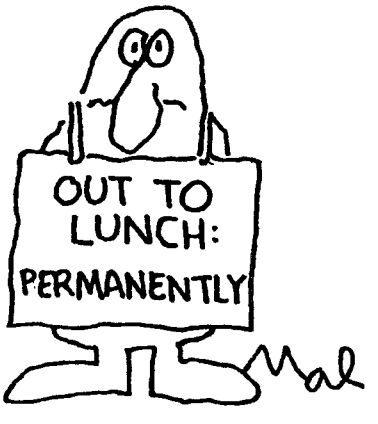
The ratio of marijuana's lethal dose to it's effective dose is 40,000 to 1 (compared to between 4 and 10 to 1 for alcohol).

Aside from the charge that legalizing a drug for medical purposes encourages recreational use—a fear that has not stopped the government from allowing doctors to prescribe a host of abusable opioids, stimulants, and sedatives—the main rap against medical marijuana is that its supporters have not satisfied the Food and Drug Administration's requirements for approving new drugs. With a five-thousand-year history of use as a medicine, marijuana is hardly a "new drug," but never mind. Since the nineteenth century, medical journals have published hundreds of studies investigating the therapeutic potential of cannabis, including more than 65 with human subjects. But large, randomized, double-blind clinical trials—the kind of studies the FDA likes to see—are conspicuously lacking.

One reason is a shortage of financial support. Marijuana cannot be patented by a pharmaceutical company, and the Federal Government has been loath to fund research that might make the main target of its war on drugs look good. Indeed, even while saying that more evidence is needed to demonstrate marijuana's effectiveness, the government has been blocking further research. In 1994, after two years of effort, Donald Abrams, a researcher at the University of California at San Francisco, won FDA approval for a pilot study of marijuana as a treatment for AIDS wasting syndrome. But the National Institute on Drug Abuse, which manages the only legal source of research marijuana in the United States, has refused to give him any.

In a sense, marijuana's effectiveness has already been demonstrated to the FDA's satisfaction, since the agency has approved Marinol, a gelatin capsule containing synthetic THC (tetrahydrocannabinol, marijuana's main active ingredient) in sesame oil, for treating both AIDS wasting syndrome and the side effects of chemotherapy. The research needed to gain approval for Marinol showed that marijuana's main active ingredient is effective for these purposes. Opponents of medical marijuana say Marinol is an adequate substitute, but many patients and doctors disagree. For people suffering from severe nausea, a capsule that must be swallowed has obvious drawbacks. Even if a patient can manage the capsule, smoked marijuana takes effect more quickly, the dosage is easier to control, and even at black-market prices it's less expensive than Marinol. Finally, other ingredients in marijuana may contribute to its therapeutic properties.

Whatever one makes of the Marinol precedent, the sort of research traditionally required by the FDA may not be appropriate for marijuana. Because of the drug's psychoactive effects, subjects could figure out pretty quickly whether they had been given the real thing or a placebo, and experimenters would probably notice too, compromising the double-blind design. Furthermore, as *New England Journal of Medicine* editor Jerome Kassirer observes, "The noxious sensations that patients experience are extremely difficult to quantify in controlled experiments. What really counts for therapy with this kind of safety margin is whether a seriously ill patient feels relief as a result of the intervention, not whether a controlled trial 'proves' its efficacy."



Scientists are rightly skeptical of anecdotal evidence, but the experiences of thousands of people who have independently found that marijuana relieves their symptoms should not be dismissed. A June 1996 poll conducted by the Prop. 215 campaign found that one in three California voters knew someone who had used marijuana for medical purposes. In their 1993 book *Marihuana, the Forbidden Medicine*, Lester Grinspoon and James Bakalar offer one account after another from patients whose symptoms subsided when they used marijuana and came back when they didn't. It seems unlikely that all these people are simply beneficiaries of a placebo effect.

Even if marijuana fails to help other patients with similar symptoms, there is little risk involved. Although the Federal Government has obstructed studies of marijuana's benefits, it has for many years enthusiastically funded research designed to prove the drug's hazards, with little to show for its efforts. In his 1992 book *Against Excess*, UCLA drug-policy scholar Mark Kleiman writes, "Aside from the almost self-evident proposition that smoking anything is probably bad for the lungs, the quarter-century since large numbers of Americans began to use marijuana has produced remarkably little laboratory or epidemiological evidence of serious health damage done by the drug." So far as we know, no one has ever died of a marijuana overdose. Based on extrapolations from animal experiments, the ratio of marijuana's lethal dose to its effective dose is something like 40,000 to 1 (compared to between 10 and 20 to 1 for aspirin and between 4 and 10 to 1 for alcohol). With a safety margin like that, the most significant risk faced by patients who use marijuana is the risk of arrest.

Polls consistently find that a large majority of Americans think such patients should be able to obtain their medicine without fear of prosecution. That view is shared by many physicians. A 1990 survey of oncologists reported in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* found that 44 per cent had

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recommended marijuana to at least one patient, 48 per cent said they would prescribe it if it were legal, and 54 per cent thought it should be rescheduled. Since the response rate was relatively low (43 per cent), these results should be interpreted with caution, but they do indicate substantial support for medical marijuana among doctors who treat cancer patients. An editorial in the January 30 *New England Journal of Medicine* said marijuana should be rescheduled, calling the current federal policy "misguided, heavy-handed, and inhumane." Repeal of the federal ban on medical marijuana has also been endorsed by the American Public Health Association, the Federation of American Scientists, and the Physicians Association for AIDS Care.

And by the Speaker of the House. Sort of. In a 1982 letter to *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, a young congressman from Georgia named Newt Gingrich boasted that he had co-sponsored a bill to legalize medical marijuana. "We believe licensed physicians are competent to employ marijuana," he said, "and patients have a right to obtain marijuana legally, under medical supervision, from a regulated source." On June 3 of this year, Rep. Barney Frank (D., Mass.) introduced a bill that would allow doctors to prescribe marijuana. So far Mr. Gingrich has not signed on. □

Pruning the FDA

Overzealous regulation keeps important health information from reaching the public.

ALEXANDER VOLOKH

THAT a man suffering from constipation should drink prune juice is a truth so fixed in people's minds that there is only one place where people are still unsure of it: Rockville, Maryland, home of the Food and Drug Administration. However well known the effects of prune juice may be to the public and the scientific community, the FDA does not allow prune-juice manufacturers to print "This product may relieve constipation" on their labels. Manufacturers who do so face civil and criminal penalties.

At least the ban on prune-juice claims does not hurt many people. Other FDA prohibitions are more harmful. Low-dose aspirin consumption, for example, can sharply reduce the risk of a heart attack. A million and a half Americans have heart attacks every year, and over half a million die; an estimated 100,000 could be saved if aspirin manufacturers were permitted to publicize their product's protective effects. However, although researchers have been documenting the benefits of low-dose aspirin since the mid 1970s, it was not until 1997 that the FDA said it might allow manufacturers to tell health professionals the good news. Even then, the agency said it would continue to ban the information from ads aimed at consumers—although G. D. Searle, maker of Bayer aspirin, recently began to flout this policy in TV commercials, so far without prompting an enforcement action by the FDA.

Durk Pearson and Sandy Shaw are scientists who have been studying the aging process and designing nutrient supplements since 1968. In 1982 their *Life Extension: A Practical Scientific Approach*, a technical tome of more than eight hundred pages, sold a million and a half copies, staying on the *New York Times* best-seller list for ten months. Flabbergasted by the public's interest, Pearson and Shaw realized that the main barriers to improving health through diet supplements had changed since 1968, when the problem was a lack of scientific knowledge. By 1982, the beneficial effects of many nutrients—including beta carotene, vitamin C, and vitamin E—had been well established; the main barrier had become the FDA's interference with the marketing of products based on such information.

The FDA permits certain health-related statements for dietary supplements, but these generally involve classic deficiency diseases (such as scurvy) or vaguely link a nutrient with a body structure or function without citing specific diseases (e.g., "This vitamin could improve the functioning of the body's natural health system"). The agency allows health claims only if they are backed by "significant scientific agreement." The problem is that no one knows what that means. The 1994 Nutritional Labeling and Education Act required the FDA to establish a procedure for identifying "significant scientific agreement," but so far the agency has refused to define the phrase.

If you walk into a health-food store today, you can look at the products on the shelves and not be able to distinguish one from another, because any manufacturer who makes a health claim could be prosecuted. Fruits and vegetables high in anti-oxidant vitamins, fiber, or omega-3 fatty acids can legally bear a claim about their role in preventing cancer or heart disease, but dietary supplements with the same ingredients can not. If a product is man-made and carries a therapeutic claim, it becomes, in regulatory terms, a "drug," and getting a claim about a drug approved can take years and cost as much as $300 million—which no one is going to spend on a widely available, unpatentable product such as prune juice or aspirin.

Frustrated by this situation, Pearson and Shaw decided to challenge the FDA in court. In 1994, together with the Preventive Medical Association, Citizens for Health, and the National Health Federation, they sued the agency, charging that its censorship of truthful health claims violates the First Amendment as well as the Nutritional Labeling and Education Act. "The FDA has one of the last great prior restraints on speech in the Western world," says Jonathan Emord, the Washington attorney handling the suit. "They prohibit *ab initio* any therapeutic claim made in association with a food, drug, or dietary supplement, regardless of whether it's true or not—unless the party has obtained FDA approval of the claim." Given the Supreme Court's traditional suspicion of prior restraint, Pearson argues, "the FDA is very vulnerable to a First Amendment attack. The main reason we sued the FDA was not to prove that vitamin E can be a useful supplement to take, but to restore the First

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Amendment's control over what the FDA is doing. If we have to go about it one substance at a time, that's a staggering amount of money and a staggering period of time, and an awful lot of dead bodies in between."

Since 1942, the Supreme Court has said that "commercial speech," which would include the claims regulated by the FDA, does not merit full First Amendment protection. But in recent years the Court has taken an increasingly dim view of restrictions on commercial speech. In the 1995 case *Coors* v. *Rubin*, for example, the Court overturned a federal prohibition of alcohol-content statements on containers of beer. The following year, in *44 Liquormart* v. *Rhode Island*, it found that a state ban on the advertisement of liquor prices also violated the First Amendment. "If *Liquormart* and *Coors* stand for any proposition, it's that there can be no absolute ban on truthful, non-misleading speech," says Emord. "Yet that's exactly what the FDA's prior restraint does. They impose the restriction on speech absolutely, and then require the industry to selectively prove the truth of their claims to the FDA's satisfaction."

Pearson and Shaw's lawsuit is pending before Judge Gladys Kessler in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. But the suit may already have helped loosen FDA policy. For years, studies suggested that women of childbearing age who took 400 micrograms of folic acid daily could reduce their babies' risk of neural-tube birth defects by as much as 40 per cent. In the 1980s, the U.S. Public Health Service, which oversees the FDA, even issued public advisories recommending that dosage. Yet until last year, the FDA took the position that no dietary supplement could carry any scientific information associating consumption of folic acid with a reduction in the risk of neural-tube defects. Each year that the FDA prohibited communication of this information on labels, about 2,500 preventable neural-tube defects occurred. In 1996, after Pearson and Shaw filed their suit, the FDA reversed its position, even though no new scientific information on the subject had appeared. "The only logical explanation for the reversal," says Emord, "is that the FDA felt the political pressure."

Given the FDA's traditional inflexibility, even this small victory for free speech and free choice calls for a toast. Break out the prune juice. □

Alcoholic Denial

The government's prejudice against alcohol is a hangover from Prohibition.

STANTON PEELE

IN 1972, Harvard epidemiologist Carl Seltzer examined data from the Framingham Heart Study and found that drinkers were less liable to heart disease than abstainers. As it turned out, the Framingham project was the first of many studies to identify moderate alcohol consumption as a prophylactic against heart disease. But the National Institutes of Health, which funded the research, refused to let Seltzer publish a paper about this result. An NIH official said, "An article which openly invites the encouragement of undertaking drinking with the implication of prevention of coronary heart disease would be scientifically misleading and socially undesirable in view of the major health problem of alcoholism that already exists in the country."

This episode, which Seltzer recounts in the May 1997 *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, illustrates the Federal Government's long-standing prejudice against alcohol. A quarter of a century after the NIH put the kibosh on Seltzer's paper, the connection between alcohol consumption and a reduced risk of heart disease is well established. More than fifty epidemiological studies have looked for a link, and almost all have confirmed the relationship found in the Framingham data. The research indicates that the risk of heart disease for moderate drinkers is 40 to 80 per cent the risk faced by abstainers.

About a dozen prominent sources of research data—including the American Cancer Society, Kaiser Permanente, and the Harvard Nurses Study—have established that moderate drinking significantly prolongs life. (The risk of coronary heart disease remains lower even for heavy drinkers, but other causes of death begin to weigh in at high drinking levels, causing a net increase in mortality.) The Harvard Physicians Health Study found a reduction in overall mortality of more than 20 per cent for men who had about one drink a day. The government's National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey estimated that drinking moderately (up to two drinks a day) prolongs the lives of white males by an average of 3 to 4 per cent. For women, the benefits of alcohol appear clearly only after menopause, about age fifty. But the life-prolonging benefits of light to moderate drinking persist for senior citizens, as was established by a 1992 study reported in the *Journal of the American Geriatric Society*.

With evidence like this accumulating, at some point the government had to take notice. But the process has been achingly slow. Every five years, the Federal Government releases its *Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. In 1990, the *Guidelines* continued to exclude positive information about alcohol, asserting that "drinking has no net health benefit." This position had become impossible to maintain by the time the 1995 report (released in January 1996) was written. And so a slight nod was given to alcohol's benefits: "Current evidence suggests that moderate drinking is associated with a lower risk for coronary heart disease in some individuals." The *Guidelines* also noted, "Alcoholic beverages have been used to enhance the enjoyment of meals by many societies throughout human history." These simple statements were more than balanced by warnings about the risks associated with higher levels of alcohol intake and about the people who should not drink (adolescents, pregnant women, drivers, those taking prescription or over-the-counter medications).

The U.S. document differed in significant ways from one produced concurrently in Britain, entitled *Sensible Drinking*. The British version identified somewhat higher levels of healthy drink-

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ing (e.g., about twice as much alcohol as the one-drink daily limit for women in the U.S. *Guidelines*). The British guide, unlike the American one, discussed the overall impact of drinking on life expectancy as well as the likelihood that drinking by premenopausal women reduces the risk of heart disease later in life. It did not offer a blanket warning against drinking by pregnant women—a warning that is hard to justify, since there is no evidence that light to moderate drinking causes birth defects.

Even so, the niggardly acknowledgments of alcohol's benefits in the U.S. *Guidelines* were hard won, as interviews with the report's scientific advisors revealed. One of them, New York University nutritionist Marion Nestle, said the changes represented "a triumph of science and reason over politics." Almost immediately after the report was published, anti-alcohol interest groups such as the Marin Institute began a campaign to reverse the statement about alcohol when the pamphlet is reissued in 2000.

Not surprisingly, the role of alcohol in preventing heart disease is still not widely known. A 1995 poll by the Competitive Enterprise Institute found that only 42 per cent of Americans were aware of medical evidence that moderate drinking reduces the risk of heart disease. Efforts by manufacturers to increase the public's awareness have been stymied by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. Federal regulations concerning the marketing of beer, wine, and liquor ban any statement about "curative or therapeutic effects if such statement is untrue in any particular or tends to create a misleading impression." The BATF has interpreted this rule as forbidding "all therapeutic claims, regardless of their truthfulness." It argues that such claims are inherently misleading, given the "harmful societal effects arising from the consumption of alcohol" and the danger to "those who for psychological or physical reasons are adversely affected thereby."

Since 1989, federal law has required that every container of beer, wine, and liquor sold in the United States bear warnings from the surgeon general about the hazards of drinking. For years importers and manufacturers have suggested balancing these somber statements with information about the culture, history, and possible health benefits of alcohol. The BATF has rejected every one of these requests. In May 1995, the Competitive Enterprise Institute petitioned the BATF to allow alcoholic beverages to carry health statements in addition to the mandated warnings, offering as one suggestion, "There is significant evidence that moderate consumption of alcoholic beverages may reduce the risk of heart disease."

In October 1996, having received no response, the CEI filed suit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, demanding that the BATF act on its petition. In January 1997, just before it was required to respond to the suit, the agency denied the CEI's petition. The CEI amended its complaint, seeking a declaration that the BATF's denial was invalid on First Amendment and statutory grounds. Recent Supreme Court rulings upholding the right of liquor stores to advertise prices and the right of brewers to tell customers the alcohol content of their beer bode well for the CEI's challenge.

Meanwhile, the Wine Institute filed its own request in June 1996, seeking permission for a label saying, "To learn about the health benefits of moderate wine consumption, write for the Federal Government's *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*." The BATF countered by requiring that the word *benefits* be replaced by *effects*, but as of this writing it has not granted the Wine Institute's petition.

The Federal Government's reluctance to admit that there might be a good side to drinking reflects a culture strongly influenced by the ideology of the temperance movement, which depicted alcohol as a demonic substance with no redeeming value. More than sixty years after the end of Prohibition, it is time for the government to acknowledge that alcohol has benefits—social, psychological, and physical—as well as hazards. Surely this is a truth with which the American people can be trusted. □

The government should acknowledge that alcohol has benefits—social, psychological, and physical—as well as hazards.

Midwifery's Rebirth

The government discourages midwifery despite its impressive record.

ARCHIE BRODSKY

A STUDY in the March *American Journal of Public Health* reported that certified nurse-midwives achieve excellent birth outcomes at a lower cost than physicians. The extensive media coverage received by the study portended a growing role for midwifery in today's cost-conscious health-care environment. Yet just a few months before the study appeared, an experienced Syracuse midwife with a loyal clientele was sentenced for the crime of helping women give birth. Arrested in a sting operation, Roberta Devers-Scott was charged with a felony: practicing midwifery without a license. To avoid prison, she pleaded guilty in November to a misdemeanor, receiving a $1,000 fine and three years' probation.

Unlike the birth attendants in the *American Journal of Public Health* study, Devers-Scott is an independent or "direct-entry" midwife. Like virtually all direct-entry midwives (but only 3 per cent of certified nurse-midwives) in this country, she attended births at home rather than in hospitals or birth centers. While CNMs are trained and regulated as part of the nursing profession, direct-

(Continues on page 60)

Mr. Brodsky, a senior research associate at Harvard Medical School's Program in Psychiatry and the Law, is a former president of Massachusetts Friends of Midwives and co-author of Home Birth: A Practitioner's Guide to Birth Outside the Hospital.

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TO: Ngingrich@HouseofReps.gov
FROM: Darmey@HouseofReps.gov
SUBJ: My medication
Newt: Just came off a pretty powerful antihistamine. Am wondering if perhaps I said or did anything last week that might have been out of the ordinary. Let me know . . . Dick

TO: Darmey@HouseofReps.gov
FROM: Ngingrich@HouseofReps.gov
SUBJ: REPLY: My medication
Brutus: Nice try. Awaiting your resignation. Newt

TO: Bpaxon@HouseofReps.gov
FROM: Darmey@HouseofReps.gov
SUBJ: You little weasel
Bill: Well well well. So you think you should be Speaker? Kind of leap-froggin' the Armey-man, huh? Watch yourself. Dick

TO: Darmey@HouseofReps.gov
FROM: Bpaxon@HouseofReps.gov
SUBJ: REPLY: You little weasel
Dick: I'm young, my wife's going to be rich, and the rank-and-file like me better. I can wait. Bill

TO: Ngingrich@HouseofReps.gov
FROM: TDeLay@HouseofReps.gov
SUBJ: Howdy, leader
Dear Newt:
Let me, at this juncture, if I might, say that without your most steady leadership and steely determination, well, a lot of us would be back in our home districts running fast-food franchises.
I just want you to know that although it's hard for we men to share our feelings—I'm not sure why, maybe we think it's not "macho"—I want you to know that both I and Mrs. DeLay think you're a very special person and for my part, big guy, let me just say that I love you.
Listen to me! I called you "big guy"! You're not "big" any more! You've lost, what, 30 pounds? And you look terrific, by the way.
Cheers, Tom

TO: TDeLay@HouseofReps.gov
FROM: Ngingrich@HouseofReps.gov
SUBJ: REPLY: Howdy, leader
Tom: Yes, I have lost about 30 pounds. Stress will do that to a person. So will eating lunch alone every day, because a person's former friends are reluctant to be seen with that person. Newt

TO: Ngingrich@HouseofReps.gov
FROM: Bpaxon@HouseofReps.gov
SUBJ: An apology
Newt:
I know this won't satisfactorily explain our actions last week, but let me just say that it's been very hard for me to face the fact that my wife, Susan Molinari, is going to be a big star on CBS News, and is going to make a lot more money than I ever will in public service, or in politics.
Does that excuse my actions? Of course not. But it does help explain how a guy like me could be convinced by some unnamed people (Dick Armey, Tom DeLay) that he could be House Speaker.
I know that my resignation from the Leadership conference is probably pretty much final, but if you need a few months (or years!!) to accept it, feel free. Hope this clears things up,
Bill

TO: Ngingrich@HouseofReps.gov
FROM: Darmey@HouseofReps.gov
SUBJ: I'm confused
Newt:
The thing is, I was on something called Hismanol, which is a pretty powerful antihistamine, but it gave me a sore throat, see? So the doctor gave me something called Seldane, which cleared my allergies right up. But the doctor—and I could just kill him for this—forgot to clue me in on the side effects: dizziness, eye pain, disloyalty, and so on.
So imagine how embarrassed I was to get your recent e-mail and to discover that you think I had anything to do with this "coup attempt" (your words). Nothing could be further from the truth!
Let's put this sorry episode behind us and get on with our agenda!
Dick

PS: We should meet soon to decide on what our agenda is. Call me and we'll set up a time.

TO: Ngingrich@HouseofReps.gov
FROM: Jkasich@HouseofReps.gov
SUBJ: The future
Newt: Old Chinese proverb: "He who designates his own successor need fear no man." Okay, I made it up, but it makes a lot of sense. John

PS: Last week I was so busy with the budget-deal negotiations that I'm a little behind. Anything interesting happen?

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BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

James Stewart's Fear of Flying

MARK STEYN

JAMES Stewart was a nervous flier. Commercial airlines made him jittery, he wouldn't touch chartered flights, and, inveigled into a Cessna during bad weather on a publicity tour for *It's a Wonderful Life*, he made the pilot turn around and take him back to the airport at Beaumont, Texas. Just a few months earlier, he had been in the Air Force; he had flown twenty bombing missions and won a Distinguished Flying Cross; he was a genuine war hero. Yet he remained a nervous flier.

For *Wonderful Life*, Stewart had a clause written into his contract forbidding any publicity exploitation of his service record. Half a century on, I think we can be permitted to make a discreet connection between his acting and his flying—in and out of uniform. He played heroes, but they tended to be nervous heroes, men of exceptional courage who nevertheless, in defiance of the cliché, *did* know the meaning of the word "fear." You can see it in a zillion different shots—in *Rear Window* (1954), say, when he picks up the telephone, realizes it's the murderer on the other end, and pushes the receiver away. Stewart was the only golden-age leading man secure enough to show real fear, the only one strong enough to appear weak. He expanded the boundaries of male movie stardom in much the same way as Sinatra, around the same time, was expanding male pop singing—co-opting large chunks of the female torch-singer repertoire, tracking down Ira Gershwin and cajoling him into writing a masculated version of "The Man That Got Away," introducing to the male vocalist's art such hitherto unknown nuances as vulnerability and self-disgust. For Stewart's take on the latter, see him in *The Philadelphia Story* (1940). Then, as now, Hollywood leading men were happy to appear fatalistic, cynical, even psychopathic, but few were willing to expose such a turbulent mix of emotions as Stewart—passion, recklessness, courage, anger, despair, gnawing dissatisfaction, and even measured thoughtfulness.

Bonnie T. Gardner

He died in early July and thereby temporarily diverted Hollywood correspondents from that weekend's summer blockbuster, in which some cocky muscleman fires off one-liners while kicking alien butt. We are all butt-kickers now—from Gulf War generals to high-school cheerleaders—and the current definition of heroism finds it hard to embrace the likes of Stewart, who, butt-wise, seemed to kick mostly his own. Coming the day after Robert Mitchum's, his death presented eulogists with a casting problem. The latter-day Mitchums are everywhere—tough guys with a laconic wit and plenty of "attitude." But where are Stewart's heirs? Most commentators settled on Tom Hanks. But look at the evasions of Hanks's *Philadelphia* story, the way the film desexes its protagonist, the way the star uses the make-up—the perspiration, the stick-on lesions—to signal his separateness from the role. Stewart never did that. As evidence of his acting ability, forget *Destry Rides Again* or *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*; instead, try *The Glenn Miller Story* (1954) and marvel at how Stewart captures the bandleader's curiously stiff smile: for so natural an actor, there can have been few more awkward assignments than Miller the stiff.

That in itself suggests that he was a cooler, more calculating character than we imagine. There was certainly a Jimmy Stewart persona, but it was created late in life for the talk-show circuit: a genial type who artfully deployed his trademark hesitation—that long, stammered "Awwwwwwwww"—in show-biz anecdotes. If Mitchum was the tough guy, then Stewart was the nice guy, star of America's most beloved sentimental movies. But it is we who are sentimental, certainly not Stewart: *It's a Wonderful Life* brims with frustration and bitterness. You want tough? Any guy who can work with wingless angels and imaginary rabbits and come out on top has got to be tough. There's a hard steel to Stewart's performances that pierces Frank Capra's suffocating paeans to hicksville integrity.

He was born in 1908 in Indiana, Pennsylvania, the sort of just-big-enough small town—pop. 9,000—most people understand by the term. It was big enough to support a hardware store, which the Stewart family ran for over a century. As a young movie actor, Jimmy would come home for the Christmas rush and clerk behind the counter; his dad displayed the Oscar for *The Philadelphia Story* in a glass cabinet formerly used for kitchen knives.

Mr. Steyn is film critic for The Spectator *and theater critic for* The New Criterion.

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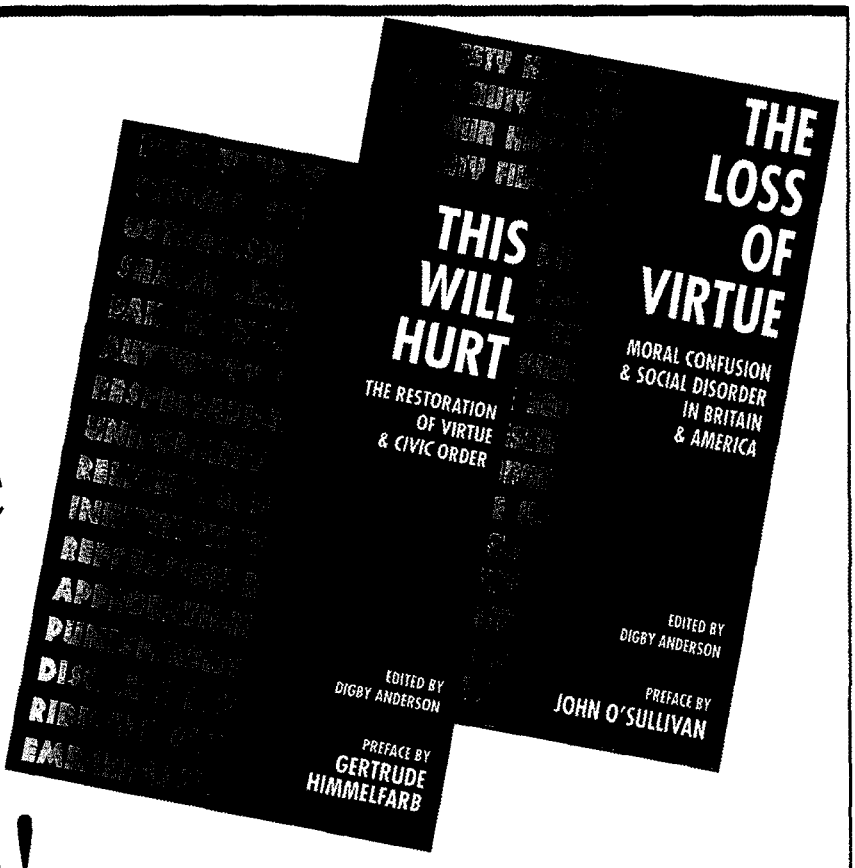
THIS WILL HURT
THE RESTORATION OF VIRTUE & CIVIC ORDER
EDITED BY DIGBY ANDERSON
PREFACE BY GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB
THE LOSS OF VIRTUE
MORAL CONFUSION & SOCIAL DISORDER IN BRITAIN & AMERICA
EDITED BY DIGBY ANDERSON
PREFACE BY JOHN O'SULLIVAN

The award-winning ***The Loss of Virtue*** tells the painful story of how Western culture abandoned the critical core virtues—such as Honesty, Tolerance, Discretion, Trust, Diligence, Fortitude, Self-Control, and Fidelity—only to find itself mired in social disorder and moral confusion.

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It was Capra who gave Stewart the role that transformed him into the emblematic everyman—Jefferson Smith, the naïve Scoutmaster who's appointed to the Senate to complete an unexpired term and discovers the place is awash in graft. Senate Majority Leader Alben Barkley denounced *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* as "silly and stupid," and Joseph Kennedy, U.S. Ambassador to the Court of St. James's, wired the President to demand the movie be withdrawn from overseas distribution because it "will cause our allies to view us in an unfavorable light." With enemies like that, who needs two thumbs up? There is a problem with the film, but it's not the portrayal of a festering, pork-happy Senate; it's the fact that the film posits a false choice—between smoke-filled sleazebags and a know-nothing. Jefferson Smith has no political principles—indeed, no interest in the place at all, except for a minor, parochial ambition to sponsor a bill for a national boys' camp. As the Washington correspondent of the *Daily Worker*, Britain's Communist paper, grumbled, this is a "phony issue": why couldn't Smith have championed a minimum-wage bill or unemployment benefits?

You want tough? Any guy who can work with wingless angels and imaginary rabbits and come out on top has got to be tough.

Well, for obvious reasons: it's much easier to be a paragon of virtue if you never make any choices. *Mr. Smith* spawned a long line of films in which the alternative to greed and political corruption is men with no coherent philosophy at all. In their glorification not of the Jeffersonian citizen-legislator but of the *idiot savant*, these films themselves contribute to cynicism about politics. Stewart dignifies the part—his baby-blue eyes ablaze with indignation—but it's unworthy of him.

A much better Jeffersonian role, in the days before William Jefferson Clinton tarnished the formulation, is that of Deputy Sheriff Thomas Jefferson Destry Jr. in *Destry Rides Again* (1939). Deputy Destry prefers whittling napkin rings to firing guns, and, in the frontier town of Bottleneck, that does not impress Boss Kent and the rest of the gang. "You shoot it out with them and for some reason they get to look like heroes," muses Stewart. "But you put 'em behind bars and they look little and cheap." Stewart can shoot if he has to, but he's more concerned to establish the conceptual authority of the Law. John Wayne's and most other Westerns are about personal ethical codes, but Stewart's, from this through *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962), are about the difficulties in submitting to abstract values.

Stewart differs from Wayne in a more obvious way, too. At the start of the Second World War, both men had just achieved their breakthrough in films that would define them to the end of their days—Stewart in *Mr. Smith*, Wayne in *Stagecoach*. But Stewart was one of the first to enlist, putting his career on hold for half a decade—which, in movie-star terms, means you may never have anything to come back to. Wayne was never prepared to take that gamble, avoiding call-up with an array of excuses to friends, including that he had misplaced the relevant forms. Stewart was the genuine article—real-life lock-and-load—though he avoided that kind of role on screen. After his death, one or two commentators sniffed about "his caustically right-wing views" and "his support for the Vietnam War," but, unlike Alec Baldwin or Barbra Streisand, he never thought his status as an "artist" entitled him to be heard on such matters.

Stewart managed his career more shrewdly than most stars before or since. Having established himself as a reluctant, drawling, folksy charmer in the Thirties, he chose increasingly to play against this image. He understood that, with great movie stars, the audience sees not only their latest picture but the accumulation of past roles. Because of his reputation as a crusading innocent, Stewart could afford to present himself as the obsessive loners of *Vertigo* and *The Man from Laramie* or as the wary defense attorney in Preminger's *Anatomy of a Murder* (1960)—the film in which all Stewart's assumptions as a long-standing heartland hero, all his beliefs in conceptual authority, are tested to their limits by an insolent brute of a client and his brazenly sensual wife.

Wayne managed his career by aging his genre—so that by the Sixties, all Westerns seemed to be about paunchy gunfighters past their prime struggling to come to terms with a changing world. Stewart, by contrast, delved deeper within himself, finding in *The Far Country* or *The Naked Spur* ever subtler tensions between his toughness and his vulnerability. He never had a "Play it again" or "Frankly I don't give a damn," and he never needed one: sometimes that stammer indicated a man with so much on his mind his tongue couldn't keep up; sometimes it indicated diffidence, sometimes a calm confidence. And just occasionally he didn't say anything at all: few other actors could have carried *Rear Window*, which works out at something like a 35 per cent silent picture. Granted that Stewart's character is wheelchair-bound and confined to his apartment—and spends his day observing the comings and goings of neighbors he can see but can't hear, and has long periods with nobody to talk to—it's still amazing that Hitchcock gives one of the longest shots in the picture (thirty seconds) to Stewart silently relieving an itch in his cast with a Chinese back-scratcher.

MOST of us have a favorite Jimmy Stewart moment like that. I'd be happy with a couple of minutes from *Born to Dance* (1936), in which, strolling with Eleanor Powell in Central Park, he introduced Cole Porter's "Easy to Love" in a thin, fragile tenor. A couple of choruses later, Miss Powell is high-kicking around the statues and, for no particular reason, a passing cop is doing impressions of histrionic symphony conductors. It's only when the picture is over that you realize Stewart's verse and chorus are the only human moments in what is otherwise a blow-out of generic production-line bombast, culminating in a star-spangled Miss Powell rat-a-tat-tatting away surrounded by orgasmic cannons. It's the scale of Stewart that makes him the quintessential American movie star: like an Irving Berlin ballad, he's modest and conversational, finding all the effects he needs within the narrowest of ranges. By comparison, Schwarzenegger and Stallone are overblown operetta arias, all high Cs and outstretched arms. Like those Berlin ballads, Stewart looms so large because he's so small, so human. For that reason alone, George Bailey in *It's a Wonderful Life* was made for him. It teaches us a uniquely American form of heroism: that one man, leading an apparently unexceptional life in an unexceptional town, can prove the decisive and transforming force in dozens of lives. Let Barbra Streisand save the world and Alec Baldwin the Arts Endowment; Bedford Falls will always have Jimmy Stewart. □

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A Girl for All Seasons

FLORENCE KING

IT IS only fair to warn you that this review will violate the standards of objectivity, detachment, and ironic distance demanded by literary criticism. I've reviewed many books that I've liked and some that I've loved, but this time I have a masterpiece on my hands and I'm still reeling from it.

An Army of Angels is a first novel by Pamela Marcantel, a Louisiana native who was raised in the French Catholic tradition. Although she wrote a great deal of fiction and poetry while in college, none of it was published, and eventually she gave it up and joined the English Department at the University of Virginia. It was here that thoughts and images of Joan of Arc began to come to her, intensifying over time until she was compelled to embark on the research that led to this book.

An Army of Angels: A Novel of Joan of Arc, by Pamela Marcantel (St. Martin's, 578 pp., $24.95)

Not the least of her many gifts is an instinct for literary structure that gets her right into the story. It opens with Jehanne (the medieval version of her name) being kicked awake in her prison cell by a brutal English guard who tells her, "We're going to burn you, witch," then flashes back to the day six years earlier when Jehanne first hears her Voices while tending her family's cows.

The manner in which the author handles the Voices of Sts. Michel, Catherine, and Marguerite will reaffirm the devout while convincing the most recalcitrant freethinker. To avoid the cheapening ghost-story effect of letting them appear as characters who speak within quotation marks, she renders them as light, the heat of a summer day, the wind against the face of a running child, a swarm of bees humming with an otherworldly intensity; and puts their words into type faces—dominant bold, feathery italic, bleak sans serif—that match the content of their messages.

To relieve the ethereality of medieval mysticism she also gives Jehanne vivid dreams full of modern allusions that make us thrill with recognition:

> Jehanne saw a spacious city rising to meet her. The inhabitants were strangely dressed and rode in bizarre carriages that moved without being pulled by horses. A tremendous statue of a knight on horseback stood in the center of the city's square, and when she asked who he was, she heard, "That is no man; that is Jehanne the Maid, who saved France from the English."

The future saint who is brought so superbly to life on these pages is a tomboy with a healthy ego who enjoys being one of the guys. "So this was what it was like to have one's legs encased in cloth!" she thinks the first time she puts on male attire. "She had never imagined what a liberating feeling it could be. No wonder men felt so vigorous and masterful, wearing such wonderfully freeing things." To the troops she leads she is "as down-to-earth and approachable as a sister," but women are another matter, especially after she becomes famous. Pestered by a wannabe mystic who claims that she, too, hears voices, Jehanne impatiently tells her, "Your place is with your husband and children." Womanly duties are not for Jehanne; "There are plenty of other women to do them," she blurts out to a hostile cleric. "Only I can do the work I was charged to do by the King of Heaven."

This review will violate the standards of objectivity, detachment, and ironic distance demanded by literary criticism.

Incapable of suffering fools, she was allied by destiny with the biggest fool in Christendom: the Dauphin Charles, declared a bastard by his own mother and robbed of his inheritance by his father, the mad Charles VI, who signed over

Miss King is the author of The Florence King Reader *and other books.*

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the throne of France to England's Henry V after the latter's triumph at Agincourt.

The combination of parental rejection and physical unattractiveness has given the Dauphin a paralyzing inferiority complex that worsens when he is exposed to Jehanne's utter certainty of purpose. She is all for attacking Paris *now*; he dithers in endless brainstorming sessions, forever polling his advisors. She wants to hold his coronation in Reims *now*; "Charles kept stalling, moving in baby steps . . . she felt as if she was trying to roll a large stone uphill." Exhausted by his need for constant reassurance, sick of his imploring glances, Jehanne comes across as Margaret Thatcher trying to keep George Bush from going wobbly.

When she finally gets him to the church, he has one of those spurts of strength to which the weak are prone and insists that Jehanne stand beside him at his coronation, an honor never before granted even to the peers of France. During the ceremony her Voices come to her in a passage of breathtaking beauty:

> Through the delicately spinning vortex she saw the domain where she most desired to be, ageless, loving; and a serenity overcame her, all at once expelling fear and reducing everything human to the level of a child's game. In the center of that eternal Moment nothing else mattered; the only thing real was that blinding, singing warmth that pulsed in her ears and whistled through her like a wind from Forever.

That the spineless Charles would betray her was in the cards. The mediocre always hold the superior back even when they are on the same side. Eisenhower did it to Patton, and Charles did it to Jehanne, relieving her as commander of the army and appointing the doddering Archbishop de Chartres in her place. In a final, incredible display of self-hatred the newly crowned Charles gave the Duc de Bourgogne, England's ally, permission to take Compiègne, one of the towns Jehanne had won, to use as a supply base for the English forces holding Paris. Said Jehanne's gallant comrade, the Bastard of Orleans: "Charles has managed to betray himself."

The account of Jehanne's capture and imprisonment contains some of the most evocative prose I have ever read. "An Englishman in a hatlike helmet threw a rotting head of cabbage at her, and it smacked wetly against her cheek, then plopped into the dust. With her arms bound, she could not wipe away the mess, which would later dry into a greenish-brown crust that cracked when she spoke."

The author uses the physical filth of the Middle Ages as metaphors for the spiritual rankness of Jehanne's enemies. Her English jailer's body "emitted the nauseating odors of urine that had dried to a dark patch across his codpiece"; when Jehanne removes the boots she has not had off for a year, "they took a layer of damp, wrinkled skin, leaving pink patches on the bottoms of her feet." Everything the medieval world took for granted—foul breath, rotten teeth, grease-laden hair, ubiquitous rats—becomes a symbol of the darkness and corruption closing in on her.

Chained to the wall in a cell in Rouen castle, deprived of food by her guards, defecated upon by one of them, she still found the wisdom and strength to give her magnificent answer to the inquisitor's trick question, "Are you in a state of grace?" A straight answer either way would have been fatal, but for once she didn't mouth off. Facing down her tormentor, she replied: "If I am not, may God put me there. If I am, may He so keep me." Was it the legendary shrewdness of the French peasant? Finesse picked up from exposure to the Dauphin's courtiers? Or her Voices guiding her answers as they had promised? It makes you wonder.

On the day of her execution she is given a dress smeared with sulphur so she "would go up like a torch." That's when I broke down. I haven't cried over a book since *Lassie, Come Home*, but now I started sobbing as my mind swirled with rescue fantasies. I saw myself on a Rouen rooftop with a rifle, putting a bullet through her head before the flames reached her. Then, somehow, I brought her home alive, proud that my perfectly ordinary apartment could offer her more comforts than the Dauphin's château on the Loire. I washed her poor feet, showed her how the shower and toilet worked, and took her shopping, enjoying the look on her face when she discovered that women's exercise tights look exactly like medieval men's hose. I bought her a pair in every color, then we had dinner and talked: "I saw that statue of you in Paris—you looked fabulous!"

I would not be her first American. During her trial she has a vision in which the monkish stenographers taking down her testimony are replaced by writers yet unborn who will champion her cause. One in particular intrigues her:

> He was dressed all in white, in a rumpled coat that buttoned down the front, its wide, bizarre flaps resting upon his chest, a stringlike tie around his neck. His hair, as snowy as his clothes, was wild and unruly, and beneath the large nose a bushy white mustache hid his mouth. A righteous yet humorous light burned like a hearth beneath his considerable eyebrows.

It's Mark Twain, who called her "the noble child, the most innocent, the most lovely, the most adorable the ages have produced." He obviously had a rescue fantasy of his own, and so, I suspect, did Miss Marcantel. *An Army of Angels* is surely a labor of love, but it is also high drama on a par with Victor Hugo and classical tragedy, laid out with the precision timing of seasoned stagecraft, graced throughout by a command of the English language that brings me to my knees. □

Americans without Disabilities

DAVID GORDON

WALTER Olson does not shrink from a challenge. He takes on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, which, he reminds us, passed both houses of Congress with little dissent.

At first glance, the reasoning behind the Act appears strong. Surely we must do what we can to help the severely handicapped obtain employment; otherwise we stand guilty of putting a stumbling block before the blind. If the call of charity does not move us, the Act's proponents contend, simple economics alone suffices to justify this measure. By easing the way for the handicapped to

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secure jobs, the Act helps to reduce welfare payments to those previously unable to work.

Our author finds the facts far different from this appealing picture. For one thing, what exactly is a handicapped person? The phrase conjures up visions of the blind or crippled, but the Act's sway extends much further:

> Presumably aware of the political benefits to be had by claiming a large constituency, ADA campaigners settled on 43 million as the number of disabled persons in America, a number they wrote into the law. In fact, the three traditional disabled groups . . . numbered less than 3 million: an estimated 1.7 million deaf, 720,000 wheelchair users, and 400,000 blind persons.

Well, so what? Why shouldn't some extra people gain the law's protection? As Olson makes clear, the Act has had strange consequences. Businesses have been compelled to hire alcoholics and the deranged; these too count as disabled. But what if they cannot do the jobs for which they were hired? Never mind: the work must be reordered so that it falls within their capacities.

It gets worse. Businesses that fail in their duty to the deranged may find themselves subjected to costly lawsuits. "A Dallas jury socked the Coca-Cola company with a $7.1-million verdict (although damage limits ensure that the eventual payout will be less) for firing an executive who entered rehab [for alcoholism] three days after what the company called 'violent and threatening behavior' at a party with working colleagues."

The Excuse Factory: How Employment Law Is Paralyzing the American Workplace, by Walter Olson (Free Press, 378 pp., $25)

But what of the genuinely disabled? Must not their gains be balanced against the anomalies just described? In point of fact, employment of these groups has not sharply increased since passage of the Act, nor have welfare payments lessened—quite the contrary. And who has ever shown that the disabled suffered from discrimination? Most people, long before the Act, have been anxious to help them.

I fear that I have so far given a misleading account of Mr. Olson's excellent book. His study encompasses far more than the Americans with Disabilities Act: our author discusses in detail such matters as workers' legal entrenchment in their jobs, so that their dismissal becomes next to impossible; the upsetting of mandatory retirement; and the invasion of the workplace by gangs of Thought Police to ensure that no "sexist" remark escapes unpunished.

Businesses have been compelled to hire alcoholics and the deranged; these too, it transpires, count as disabled.

I have discussed the Disabilities Act in detail, rather than skim over Olson's abundance of topics, since concentrating on one subject is probably the best way to clarify the pattern the author has discovered. In each area he discusses, a benign goal—countering capricious dismissals, blocking prejudice against the aged—leads to a law that interferes with freedom of contract. The law fails to achieve the ends its proponents claim to seek. Instead, it subjects businesses to Kafkaesque bureaucracies and threatens employers with lawsuits for innocuous behavior—as in the case of a Texaco employee "who lost out on a promised upgrade to credit manager" and was awarded $20 million by a California jury.

Mr. Olson's frequent mention of lawsuits may arouse in some minds an objection. Perhaps the problem lies not in the laws themselves, but in the avidity with which lawyers twist these laws to secure princely sums for their clients and themselves.

Our author responds that laws which attempt to secure vague goals inevitably offer a foothold to bureaucrats and lawyers. What is age discrimination? "Sexist" speech? These concepts have no precise definition, a fact that invites lawyers and judges to define them to their own liking.

Mr. Olson advances a drastic solution to the problems he so ably describes. No, it is not "kill all the lawyers." Rather, he proposes an end to interference with freedom of contract. Em-

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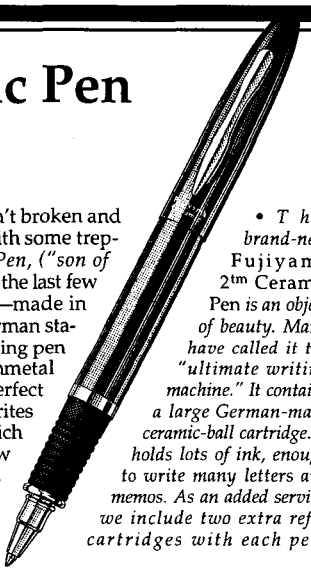

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ployers should not be confined by arbitrary regulations telling them whom they may fire and hire; the traditional doctrine of "employment at will" should be restored.

At a few places, the book might usefully have been extended. The arguments raised against employment at will should have been analyzed in more detail. From Mr. Olson's brief account, readers will not easily grasp why Mark Kelman, a paragon of the Critical Legal Studies movement, thinks that qualifications for jobs are socially contingent matters that generate no entitlements. The observation that "workers commonly wind up 'paying for' their own benefit packages in the form of lower wages" rests on more than a few studies: it follows at once from elementary economic theory. The author's claim that the Supreme Court's decision in *NLRB* v. *Jones & Laughlin* (1937) did not reflect the Court's sincere view but was "submission to a show of sheer force" goes beyond the evidence.

But these are details of minor importance. Walter Olson has presented a devastating criticism of our employment law, based on thorough research and cogent argument. What Isabel Paterson termed "the humanitarian with the guillotine" succeeds no better in employment law than anywhere else. □

Solid Gould

RICHARD BROOKHISER

GLENN Gould, the eccentric Canadian pianist, died in 1982, but his cult lives on. When my wife and I went to a screening of a movie about him a few years ago, a man in the row ahead of us was showing off pictures he had taken of Gould's gravestone. The fan was also wearing gloves

Glenn Gould: The Ecstasy and Tragedy of Genius, by Peter F. Ostwald (Norton, 368 pp., $29.95)

(Gould, terrified of catching cold, wore them when he wasn't playing, no matter what the weather). There aren't many movies about Rubinstein or Horowitz, and no one who went to one would go in costume.

In 1989, Otto Friedrich, a journalist with *Time*, published *Glenn Gould: A Life and Variations*, a solid biography. Peter Ostwald comes from a different angle: a violinist and a psychiatrist, he met Gould after a concert in 1957 and saw him off and on over the next twenty years. Ostwald played with him, collaborated with him, and got many midnight phone calls from him. He is careful not to call himself Gould's friend; Gould didn't have any friends.

Glenn Gould was born in Toronto in 1932, the only child of a furrier and a woman who had wanted to be an opera singer. When Florence Gould was pregnant, she sang, played the piano, and listened to records and the radio, in the hope that her fetus would acquire a taste for music. It must have worked. She started teaching Glenn to play when he was three. He became a prodigy, then a local celebrity. He burst into the wider world in 1956, with a recording of Bach's *Goldberg Variations*—a recording which has never gone out of print, and which must be one of the best-selling classical recordings ever. In performance, writes Ostwald, "Gould became ecstatic, his expression one of rapture, his eyes closed or turned inward, and his hands caressing the keyboard as if he were making love." He pulled "his spectators into psychological orbits both close to him and far away, in some ethereal space."

His oddity was as pronounced as his talent. He put his pianos up on blocks and sat on a low stool (made for him by his father), so that his face was inches away from the keys. He sang as he played, often quite audibly. He thought audiences were out to get him, and he often canceled concerts, giving them up entirely after 1964 to play only in studios, where he could be safe. Clever and articulate, he loved to talk, but only in monologues, usually over the phone. "He shacked up with a broad for about a year, some conductor's wife," his accountant told Ostwald ungallantly. "I know, because I saw the expenses." But nothing ever came of this or his few other affairs. He believed he was prey to a host of ailments, mostly imaginary, and he consumed cabinets of pills, whose bad effects were not imaginary. Ostwald asked another psychiatrist friend of Gould's if he had ever suggested that Gould get his head examined. "Never in a million years. . . . It would have been the end of our friendship" (such as it was).

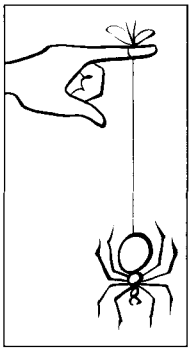
Dr. Ostwald does some examining at a distance. He is best on Gould's relationship with his mother, who was clearly a major source of his blessings and his frailties.

> As soon as Glenn was able to sit up, his mother would take him to the piano. . . . She sang while playing [and] would encourage his tiny hands to reach out and grope those shiny black and white levers. . . . This may be the origin of Glenn's future posture when playing. His need to be very close to the piano would recall the warm feelings and earlier proximity of both mother and instrument.

But there was also something cold about Mrs. Gould. "She was very didactic and precise," one of her piano students recalled. "No faking, and it was ruler across your fingers if you made a mistake." Gould projected this side of his mother onto his supposedly hostile audiences, and perpetuated it in his own perfectionism.

Was madness a necessary element of Glenn Gould's talent?

If ecstasy and tragedy come from the same place, are they the same thing? Virtuosos often capitalize on their appearance or their behavior—if Chopin had looked and acted like Jackie Mason, he would not have been Chopin—and Gould's eccentricities certainly helped his reputation. His mannerisms, and some of his antics, seemed like lesser manifestations of the rapture that suffused his playing. Gould may also have stimulated in his admirers a touch of the unconscious sense of superiority that the crazy Australian David Helfgott provokes. Helfgott fans think they are admiring a triumph of the human spirit, but they are also admiring themselves: *I can't play the piano, but at least I'm not a nut.*



Mr. Brookhiser is a senior editor at NR.

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But was madness a necessary element of Gould's talent? Is it of any talent? Ostwald doesn't address the question. Surely the answer is no. Except perhaps for actors (who assume other identities) and dancers (who use their bodies as instruments), the level of craziness among creative people is no higher than among everyone else. Expressing a talent requires study and work, but it is no harder than many other jobs, and it is more interesting.

Ostwald's last visit with Gould occurred after a gap of more than ten years, and he was shocked by the deterioration. "His face and body had become bloated. He looked fat, flabby, and stooped. . . . His skin, which had always been on the pale side, had acquired an unnatural greyness, roughly the color of steel, due probably to the lack of sunlight." Music did not bring him to this condition, and his condition impeded his music-making.

Gould wrote that he aspired to "a state of wonder and serenity," and that is what his best recordings convey. His version of the *Goldberg Variations* is one of the few pieces of music that can be enjoyed from a sickbed. When other music sounds bustling or hysterical, it is bright and calm. Gould looks at Bach's handiwork, Bach looks at God's. Everything is all right. □

FILM

The Dance of Life

JOHN SIMON

IT MAY be that the profoundest works of stage and screen perceive comedy and drama as not just jostling each other, but actually interpenetrating until they become almost indistinguishable. Such plays are *The Misanthrope*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Glass Menagerie*; such films are *The Children of Paradise*, *I Vitelloni, Tokyo Story*, and now Masayuki Suo's superb ***Shall We Dance?***, one of the great films of all time.

Unfortunately, it is extremely hard to write about. First, because so much of it is conveyed through a glancing remark, a mere suggestion, even a silence. Second, because there are so few grand incidents that one hesitates to give away any of them. The very silences are twofold: those in which an important thing hovers shyly, tremulously just this side of speech; and powerful, abrupt lacunae the viewer has to fill in with his imagination. This is a movie so understated that much of it is told by the eyes and feet of its characters.

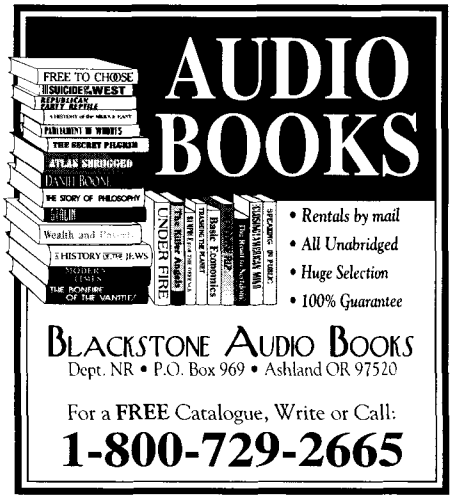
Shohei Sugiyama is 42 and a company man, one of those mid-level employees of a large Japanese concern whose lives are as assured as they are predictable and unexciting. He has a sympathetic wife and a clever teenage daughter, a car, and a house he has just bought in the suburbs, and he will dutifully go on until he drops. There ought to be more to life than that. Then, returning one evening from work on the commuter train, he notices during one of the stops a lovely, melancholy young woman gazing out the window of a dance school. From now on he watches for her each time his train stops there. Sometimes he sees her giving dance lessons, sometimes staring—absorbed, abstracted—through that window.

Social dancing, as a charming prologue informs us, is not truly accepted in Japan, where married couples seldom go out together, and never display any mutual feelings. Still less does one go out with a member of the opposite sex not one's spouse. Thus ballroom dancing, with the close physical contact between partners, is widely frowned upon, except in dance halls, which, however, are by definition *infra dig*.

Well, Sugiyama gets off the train for a better view of the woman at the window, whose enormous eyes seem to contain worlds of yearning. Looking carefully left and right to make sure no one is watching, he ventures up the stairs to the school's door, but it takes a funny accident to get him over the threshold. As tongue-tied as an unprepared schoolboy, he all but lets the lovely lady enroll him for private lessons which he cannot afford, when a middle-aged woman teacher comes over to announce that the beginners' group is one short; this Sugiyama can pay for, and he enthusiastically signs up.

At home, his understanding wife has urged him to get out of his depression by staying out later with his office mates. So the clandestine Wednesday-evening dance classes arouse no suspicion. And a new world of dance and dream opens up for the accountant. The three other men in his group are not all strictly beginners. A tiny bespectacled

Mr. Simon is NR*'s film critic.*



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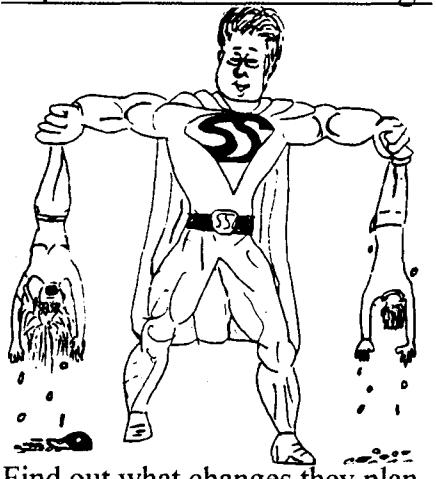

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fellow, in it to catch up with his wife, has some previous experience and tries to lord it over the others. A bizarre long-haired chap, wildly show-offy on the dance floor, fancies himself a rival to Donny Burns, the champion Latin dancer. A homely, fat young man was told by his doctor that dancing would be good for his diabetes.

Their teacher, disappointingly to Sugiyama, is to be middle-aged Miss Tamura, who, though kindly and shrewd, is no match for Mai Kishikawa, the owner's beautiful daughter, for whom many men have joined up. Right now, Sugiyama must watch Mai give private lessons to a rich, elderly lecher, whose pawings she deftly parries. But Sugiyama gallantly stumbles ahead through the two propaedeutic party dances and on to the ten ballroom dances, and keeps up with his group, more elegant than the others. Masayuki Suo makes the lessons, the steps and missteps and the surrounding incidents, funny, touching, and deeply involving.

Meanwhile Sugiyama's office existence is sketched in concisely but tellingly, as is his home life, where his wife smells on his shirts first one scent, then, after he attends dance parties, a more bedeviling mixture of scents. With considerable difficulty, she brings herself to consult a private eye, who proves a fascinating character. The director manages to make all subplots come racily alive. But most enchanting are the dance school, dance parties, dance halls, and, finally, dance competition, and a climactic finale, as well as, in flashbacks, Blackpool, England, where the ballroom world championships take place.

There is the tremendously affecting story of what happens, or doesn't happen, between Sugiyama and Mai, and also Sugiyama and his wife. But there are other juicy characters, notably plain, chubby, middle-aged, and cantankerous Toyoko, a good advanced student who becomes Sugiyama's cranky partner in the Eastern Japan Amateur Competition. There are the stories of Sugiyama's fellow group members, one more endearing than the next. There are the two detectives who, at first merely trailing Sugiyama, become genuinely involved in the dance. And much more that you must explore for yourself.

The dance is supreme, a metaphor for life itself with its ideals and pitfalls, its hopes and setbacks, its exhilarating mini-triumphs and confoundingly bitter jokes. Mai is Terpsichore, the spirit of the dance. When she hops, glides, floats along in a quickstep, guiding Sugiyama and Toyoko in a miraculous threesome across a seemingly dissolving floor, we watch transfixed and transported; it is as liberating an experience as art can bestow. The bittersweet peripetias in the course of which Mai and Sugiyama,

The dance is a metaphor for life.

who cannot become lovers but give something infinitely precious to each other, are so beautiful that even thinking about them brings tears to my eyes. The closest comparison is to *Brief Encounter*, but this is deeper and lovelier.

Every part, down to the merest walk-ons, is impeccably acted, and the leads are magnificent. Koji Yakusho, as Sugiyama, is the decent, average man rising to heights of generosity. His progression from dancing merely for Mai to discovering the joy of dance for its own sake is conveyed with ineffable tact, indeed nobility, and a magicianly blend of comedy and pathos. Hideko Hara is poignant as the wife, and as "Donny" Aoki, Naoto Takenaka is sublime in his funny-sad clowning. As Mai, Tamiyo Kusakari, a leading ballerina whose first dramatic role this is, is an archetypal *bijin*, or Japanese beauty, who embodies equally the ethereal and the sexy in dance, and proves, beyond that, an actress of shattering power.

Behind all this is the genius of the writer-director, Masayuki Suo. With what self-effacing but unfailing artistry he knows when to cut a scene off short on a key line, or when to stretch a scene out, pleasurably or achingly. He knows the interplay of brightly lit and dark sequences, the canny alternation of staccato and legato—in sum, what really counts, the music of filmmaking: rhythm, counterpoint, polyphony, and the interweaving of contrasted themes to maximum effect. Further, he sees the goodness in all his characters, even the most risible ones, and approaches them all with deference and affection.

From Yoshikazu Suo, he gets the letter-perfect music score in absolutely apposite arrangements. And in Naoki Kayano, he has the cinematographer whose color sense subtly matches the words and music. There is, near film's end, as Mai speaks her letter to Sugiyama in voiceover, a brief shot of her in front of a seascape. It comprises cool slate blues and off-whites such as have never figured in the film's palette, but here complete a necessary color scheme. That is artistry. I can hardly wait to see *Shall We Dance?* for the third time. □

SOUND ON DISC

From Chant to Flamenco

RALPH DE TOLEDANO

PETER Ilyich Tchaikovsky—as composer of the *Pathétique* and, of the bravura *1812 Overture*, with its pomp, patriotism, and pounding cannon—represents to many the sometimes overblown Romantic movement in nineteenth-century Russia. But there is much more to his music—reflecting as it does his inner torments, his conflicts over his homosexuality which led him into an impossible marriage, and his yearning search for God and the transcendent. This last meant much more to him than the critics reckon. In a letter to his patroness, Nadezhda von Meck, he wrote: "There is nothing like entering an ancient church, standing in the semi-darkness, lost in deep contemplation searching for an answer to the wherefore, when, whither, and why."

In his *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, Tchaikovsky celebrated this search. The voice speaking to us through him is the Russian Orthodox liturgy. After the break between East and West, when the Latin Mass moved with the currents of Western music, the Orthodox musical tradition remained close to its roots in the Jerusalem Temple, at which the early Christians worshiped until its destruction in A.D. 70. The "echoes" or "tones" of the Hebraic ritual survived in Russia, and for a time in Spain, where

Mr. Toledano is the author of Frontiers of Jazz *and many other books.*

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they had been taken by Jews who migrated, beginning in the time of Solomon, on the ships of Hiram of Tyre.

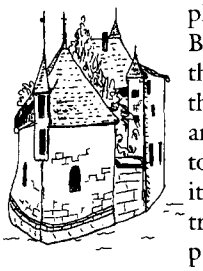
You can hear this tonality in the Tchaikovsky work (Philips 446 685-2) and in *Credo* (Philips 446 089-2), religious music by various composers of roughly the same period. The Tchaikovsky *St. John* is in its concert version—that is to say, it eliminates the passages in which the priest alone is given utterance; its chanting song is hauntingly beautiful, as are the pieces on *Credo,* sung by baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky. The St. Petersburg Chamber Choir under Nikolai Korniev gives moving performances on both recordings.

■ Mention Beethoven's piano concertos, and the usual reaction will be, "Ah, the *Emperor*!"—much like the baker's wife in *La Femme du Boulanger* who rhapsodizes, "Ah, Rome! the Leaning Tower!" Of the concertos, No. 4 in G is by far the greatest, not only for its intrinsic merits but also because Beethoven put thumb to nose at the classicists by opening in violation of precedent with piano instead of orchestra, to great dramatic effect. I have heard the No. 4 in G many times, in concert and on disc, played by Schnabel, Serkin, Gieseking, and others, but it still brings me to my feet. The greatest recording has been by Paul Badura-Skoda, giving his rendition added validity by playing on a fortepiano of Beethoven's time.

The 'echoes' or 'tones' of the Hebraic ritual survived in Russia.

But it was nevertheless with considerable interest that I put on my changer the CD reissue of the traversal by Emil Gilels, with George Szell conducting the Cleveland Orchestra (EMI 5 69506 2). Gilels carries excitement to the keyboard, and then piles on drama. The concerto has passages that respond to him. But he makes the andante of the second movement almost an adagio, and he takes too many liberties in dynamics and tempo in the third movement. I shall stick with my Badura-Skoda.

■ There has been a spate of recordings of Béla Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra*, but I find the CD issue by Esa-Pekko Salonen and the Los Angeles Philharmonic among the best (Sony SK62598). It is also Bartók at his best, bringing together all the elements that had slowly developed in his music, but casting aside the "modernism" of his earlier work, returning to tonality and reaching into a rich folk heritage. It is coupled with Bartók's earlier *Music for Strings, Percussion & Celesta*, a taut work whose fugal passages and second movement give emphasis to Ezra Pound's dictum that poetry and music must never stray too far from the dance. This work is not for everyone: for all the talk in the critical journals, atonality and extended dissonance are unappealing to many. But for some it may be just an exercise in listening, which in this case should hardly be a chore.



■ Claude Debussy was above all a *French* composer, but the great expositor of his music was a German, Walter Gieseking, who was an adornment to American music in the pre-war days. He strolls though Debussy's solo work for the keyboard, and strides when that is what the score demands. This album (EMI 65855, four CD discs in all) promises *The Complete Works for Piano*—and the absence of one or two titles should not cause distress. Four CDs of almost anything, except perhaps for the music of the spheres, is too much to take at one sitting, but Gieseking, by the felicity of his interpretation, keeps us riveted. Judicious spacing, however, makes for better appreciation.

■ As a child in the International Zone of Tangier, I could from time to time, with head pressed to the heavy iron gates that guarded our place, hear the Maghrebi accents of a passing procession, reiterating the music that the retreating Moors brought with them from the Andaluz. *Música Andalusí*, played by the Ensemble Ibn Báya (Sony SK 62262), brings this back, in a performance of the *nuba*—Mozarabic rhythms and tonalities which survive today in Morocco. Like old jazz, it is made up of subtly changing traditional forms, sung and played, and improvisational embellishment. This music is sometimes seemingly monotonous, but careful listening discloses that, like the blues of the Mississippi Delta, it is highly complex rhythmically and melodically. The songs recorded on this CD are lovely and exotic.

■ The Romeros—Celedonio, Celin, Pepe, and Angel—are billed as the Royal Family of the Spanish Guitar, and their latest album, *The Romeros* (Philips/Mercury 434 385-2), sustains that claim. They run the gamut from the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century composers such as Luis Milán, to Bach, to the *flamenco*, and to later Spanish composers such as Granados and Torroba. The classical guitar, an instrument of far greater eloquence than its jazz and amplified cousins, succeeded the medieval lute and was an important element in Spain's musical voice. □

FAIRY TALES

Once upon a Pamphlet

DON RICE

TWO recently published biographies of Bruno Bettelheim sent me searching for my old copy of Bettelheim's *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. Inside I found a folded-up copy of John Updike's *New York Times* review, which I had placed there 21 years ago. I sat down to re-read it.

Updike described Bettelheim's book as a profound work showing us "how cunningly, how lovingly, the anonymous generation of a 'happier age' prepared their children for the challenges of life and guided them toward sexual, ethical health" through the creation and retelling of fairy tales.

"Sleeping Beauty," Updike wrote, "and Beauty and the Beast are active metaphors in our contemporary language of self-understanding, and even (nay *especially*) a child can sense that the

Mr. Rice is a writer in Columbus, Ohio.

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story of Little Red Riding Hood deals with phallic aggression." Further on:

> The drops of blood that figure in so many young heroines' enchantments surely *are* the blood of menstruation and defloration; the resemblance between frogs and toads and male genitals needs only to be pointed out to be assented to. That "Hansel and Gretel" is all about oral greed; . . . that Little Red Cap is reborn into sexual maturity after a dangerous experiment in flirtation; that Cinderella asks to be accepted by the prince in her natural "dirtiness" as she slips her penile foot into his vaginal slipper—all this appears in retrospect obvious, and indisputably part of fairy tales' perennial weight, menace, resonance, and consolation.

I shook my head just as I had 21 years earlier. Both Updike and Bettelheim had served up a cold—and old—bowl of porridge. Why Updike hadn't noted, even in passing, that Bettelheim had overlooked an even richer and much more exciting source of "important messages to the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious mind" is beyond understanding. I refer, as I am sure most have already guessed, to reports and pamphlets published by the United States Government.

Consider, to choose one example almost at random, *The First Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor*, published in 1886. It was in 1884 that Congress acted (ovulated), that President Garfield signed the act (the father figure fertilizing it with the ink from his phallic pen), and that the Bureau of *Labor* became a fetus within the Department of the *Interior*, eventually emerging in 1888 as a department itself. A long gestation period, but who could deny the symbolic process of birth?

The introduction to the report is liberally sprinkled with words such as "potent," "period," "production," "lay down," and "generation"—words of such obvious sexual connotation that their mention in any seventh-grade classroom is guaranteed to elicit naughty snickers from the students.

Many of the report's 496 pages are devoted to tables showing the relative wages for men and women in various occupations. This need to sort and classify is indicative of the strict potty training to which so many government employees were then and are still subjected. It is highly appropriate that the sorting and classifying here relate to money. The connection between money and excreta has long been recognized and is reflected in our obsession with financial statements.

Many government reports deal with even kinkier matters. *The Second Annual Report of Agriculture Secretary J. M. Rusk*, published in 1890, is similar to "The Little Red Hen" in having as its theme the rare perversion of phraterphagy. You recall how the mother (the hen), deserted by her mate, after vainly seeking love from her children (the other animals), resorts to autogeny (or so she pretends); and when she finally gives birth to yet another child (the fresh bread from her "oven") the siblings want to devour it.

Bettelheim overlooked a rich source of the sexual fears and frustrations of a great nation.

One need not go back to the last century to find government publications in which our intuitive sexual impulses are expressed. Read the U.S. Department of Commerce publication *Sundials* (Circular of the Bureau of Standards, No. 402) in which the gnomon (penis) casts its ominous shadow on the pubescent dial. Then there is the Department of Agriculture's *Fireplaces and Chimneys* (Farmer's Bulletin No. 1889) with symbolism so obvious it need not be discussed. In the Library of Congress pamphlet *Yugoslav Abbreviation* (LC 35.2 : Y 9/2/962) the fear of castration is faced boldly and starkly; the threat of homosexual rape is the basic theme of *Stratigraphy of the Morrison Formation and Structure of the Ambrosia Lake District* (I 19.3 : 1272E). Consider *Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States* (published by the Committee on House Administration per House Concurrent Resolution No. 320). Even the most sexually innocent can recognize this as an oral-sadistic fantasy.

You can see from this meager sampling the incredible amount of material available. It is within the pages of U.S. Government publications that the sexual fears and frustrations of a great nation are unconsciously expressed. Indeed, they may be considered humankind's noblest bibliotherapeutic achievement. I sat in my wingback chair, as I had 21 years ago, wondering why a man of Bettelheim's insight had not given them the analytic treatment they deserved but instead wasted his time on children's fairy tales—and I still had no answer. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

The Assault on Parenthood: How Our Culture Undermines the Family, by Dana Mack (Simon & Schuster, 368 pp., $25)

ACROSS the country, across lines of race, class, and sex, hundreds of parents told Dana Mack the same thing: I just want them to leave me alone. "Them" would be the multitude of forces that beguile, direct, or captivate children, and make a parent's always-challenging job nearly impossible. Miss Mack examines these forces with exacting precision, supported by careful research. Popular psychology labels all parents as dysfunctional; child-welfare bureaucracies persecute them for imaginary crimes; courts punish them for their children's bad behavior but forbid them to punish their children. Miss Mack rehearses the familiar flaws of the educational establishment, and they're still depressing. The clumsy destructiveness of sex education gets its own chapter, as does the more elusive problem of increased materialism and decreased meaning, leading to a scary description of "the couch-potato child: sexually precocious, cynical, materialistic, culturally rootless, and overweight." We've achieved the culture our starving ancestors dreamed of, an age of peace, prosperity, and plenty—and this is the fruit (or rather the potato). Miss Mack closes with an examination of "the new familism" expressed in alternative schooling and a general retreat from the culture, and provides seven recommendations for pro-family public policy. But as she acknowledges, the individual parents composing this massive counterculture feel weary and isolated, and not yet much interested in fighting for policy changes. How bad will it have to get before "Leave me alone" turns to "Let me at 'em"?

—FREDERICA MATHEWES-GREEN

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BRODSKY
(Continued from page 47)

entry midwives are trained at independent midwifery schools or through apprenticeship. Legal in some states, illegal in others, direct-entry midwives are the primary home-birth attendants in the United States.

Midwifery represents a fundamentally different model of care from obstetrics, and home birth offers the fullest realization of that nonmedical, woman-centered approach. But midwives are prevented from competing in a free market by statutory, regulatory, professional, and institutional constraints. They face the threat of prosecution for practicing illegally or exceeding the scope of their practice, a threat exacerbated by selective prosecution for clinical errors or tragic outcomes that would not be dealt with punitively in hospital obstetrics.

Study after study has demonstrated that midwives provide high-quality, cost-effective care. The study that caused such a stir last spring showed that, for comparable low-risk urban populations in the state of Washington, CNMs were less likely than either obstetricians or family physicians to resort to common obstetrical interventions, such as continuous electronic fetal monitoring, induction or augmentation of labor, epidural anaesthesia, and episiotomy. Most strikingly, the Caesarean-section rate for women attended by midwives (including those transferred to physicians' care for labor complications) was just 8.8 per cent, compared to 13.6 per cent and 15.1 per cent, respectively, for obstetricians and family physicians. As a result, nurse-midwives used 12.2 per cent fewer resources than physicians.

Noting that the midwives' approach to low-risk births "has significant advantages for patients," the researchers recommended "expanding the proportion of deliveries attended by midwives" and teaching physicians some of the skills and philosophy of midwives. The principal investigator, Dr. Roger A. Rosenblatt of the University of Washington School of Medicine, told the *New York Times*, "We physicians have something to learn from midwives about the approach to low-risk women."

This is old news to those familiar with the published research about midwifery over the last quarter-century. In fact, the Washington study was as remarkable for what it left out as for what it said. Because they limited their focus to births in hospitals, the researchers did not examine the equally good outcomes and even greater savings achieved by midwives in free-standing birth centers and in homes.

Recent evidence that home birth is a safe option for low-risk women comes from four studies published in the *British Medical Journal* last November. Conducted in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, they showed that planned, properly attended home births presented no greater risks than hospital births for appropriately screened pregnancies. Indeed, in the Dutch study, women who had given birth previously had significantly *better* outcomes in planned home births.

The advantages of home birth include fewer interventions, greater continuity of care (with the same midwife staying for the duration, even in prolonged labor), greater comfort and control for the woman and her family, less disruption of the family's usual pattern of living, and a richer, more intimate experience in a familiar environment. In one of the British studies, 85 per cent of the women who had previously given birth in a hospital preferred their home births. Of those who planned more children, 91 per cent intended to give birth at home again.

Midwifery represents a fundamentally different model of care from obstetrics.

These women also placed high value on the freedom to choose the place of their children's birth, a right explicitly recognized by the British government. One woman wrote that home birth "is not for everyone, but freedom of choice is priceless." As the Dutch researchers noted, exercising choice may itself have psychological benefits, reducing anxiety and enhancing the woman's sense of well-being. These benefits of choice may then translate into improved outcomes.

In Europe midwives attend about three-quarters of all births; in the United States they attend only 5 per cent. This disparity is especially striking given midwifery's cost-cutting potential: Based on an average saving of $3,000 a midwife-attended birth, a 1995 Cato Institute report estimated that consumers and insurers could save $2.4 billion annually if 20 per cent of American women used midwives. The University of Washington researchers acknowledged that "barriers imbedded in both licensure regulations and hospital privileging processes" discourage the use of midwives. If institutionally based nurse-midwives are marginalized, home-birth midwives are even further excluded. They must practice underground in some states and, even where legal, may have difficulty obtaining medical consultation. Despite these obstacles, direct-entry midwives attending planned home births in the United States have compiled a safety record comparable to that of low-risk hospital births.

Midwives continue to engage in state-by-state legislative and judicial skirmishes, winning legal recognition or additional prerogatives in some states while suffering setbacks in others. Looming over these local developments is the prospect of a massive turf battle stemming from a move by the American College of Nurse-Midwives to claim the "direct-entry" title for its own members. The ACNM has proposed certifying "direct-entry" midwives who complete a university-based, ACNM-accredited training program. But the ACNM's insistence on institutionally based training and a bachelor's degree as requirements for all midwives has brought the organization into conflict with the Midwives' Alliance of North America (MANA), which supports multiple routes to certification and vigorously defends the tradition of apprenticeship.

THE impasse with MANA may ultimately lead to greater understanding and cooperation. Until then, injustices like those now occurring in New York will continue. New York's Midwifery Practice Act of 1992 made midwifery a separate profession. But a clause requiring a written practice agreement with a physician compromised the independence the act promised. Worse, the law imposed an educational requirement that few of the direct-entry midwives practicing in the state could meet, and it classified unauthorized practice as a felony. Taking the law at face value, some long-established community midwives, including Roberta Devers-Scott, presented their qualifications and asked for licenses. Instead, they found themselves prosecuted—poor thanks for helping to bring life into the world. □

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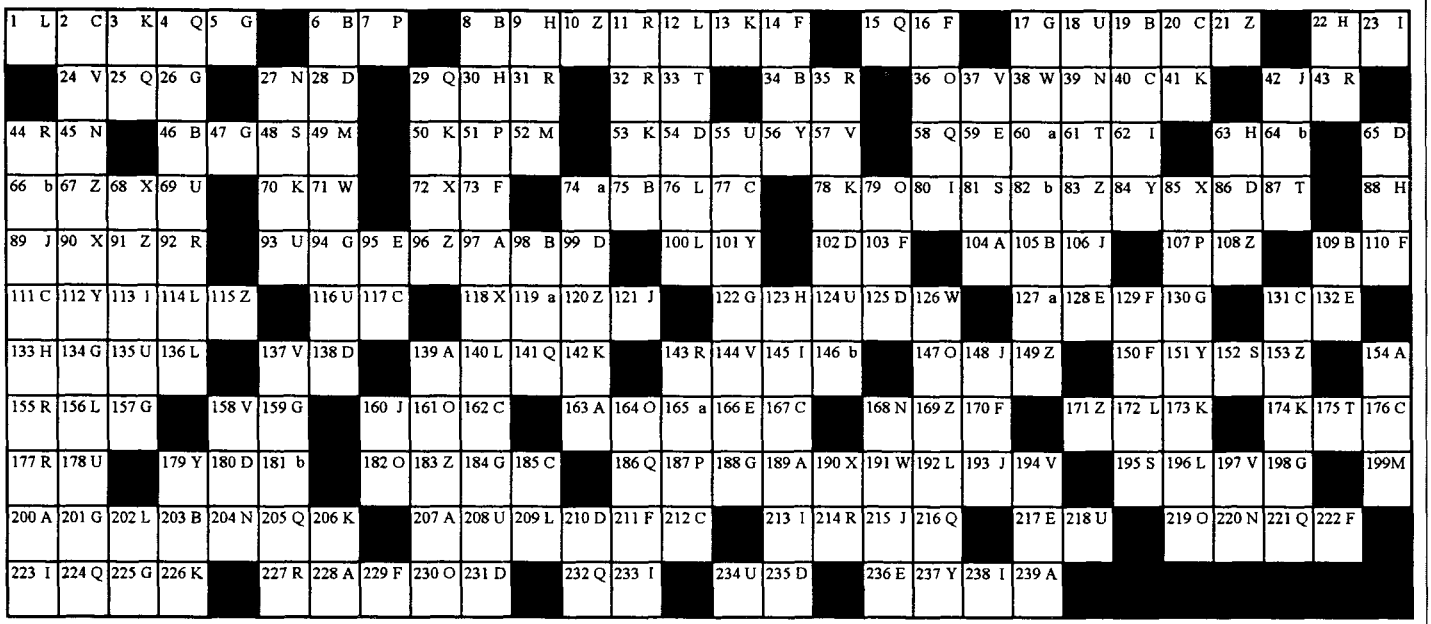
TRANS-O-GRAM / Siegfried R. Reiner



DEFINITIONS

A. Jehovah's Witnesses' bastion in print — 139 154 200 104 228 189 97 163 239 207

B. Brooding process — 19 109 203 98 34 105 46 6 75 8

C. FL, on Europe's auto bumpers — 185 131 20 2 111 162 117 40 167 77 176 212

D. Warning from crow's nest to deckhands (3 words) — 125 180 65 210 28 86 99 54 138 231 235 102

E. Narrow neck of land, like Panama — 128 132 95 59 236 217 166

F. What the Marines are looking for (4 words) — 229 16 103 150 14 110 211 170 129 73 222

G. William Clark's traveling companion (2 words) — 225 159 201 94 17 130 198 134 26 188 184 5 122 47 157

H. Indian councils — 30 123 63 22 9 133 88

I. Former — 233 238 145 223 213 62 113 80 23

J. Robert Fulton's submarine, or Hyman Rickover's — 106 42 148 215 89 193 160 121

K. Cold drizzle and biting winds (2 words) — 13 53 78 70 206 174 3 50 142 41 226 173

L. Reasoning — 76 156 136 12 196 209 202 192 140 1 100 172 114

M. Perot's corporate empire, initially — 49 52 199

N. Creeds — 45 168 39 204 220 27

O. Unkind cuts (2 words) — 230 164 219 147 36 79 182 161

P. What means are in aid of — 187 51 107 7

Q. Schulz's hapless kite-flier (2 words) — 186 216 29 4 205 224 221 232 25 15 58 141

R. Athens' naval visionary — 31 11 35 143 214 43 32 44 177 155 92 227

S. Title applied to Mohammed and to Shiite priests — 81 48 152 195

T. He gave us "all the news that's fit to print" — 33 61 175 87

U. Intro to all-hands announcement (3 words) — 234 55 93 18 208 135 124 69 178 116 218

V. Cargo-hold passenger — 197 57 144 137 37 158 24 194

W. Classical Rome's love poet — 71 38 191 126

X. Billy Dale, to Ahab and Jezebel? (I Kings 21) — 90 190 72 85 118 68

Y. Rumination — 101 151 237 56 179 112 84

Z. Spoiling for a row (3 words) — 120 149 91 21 183 169 115 10 108 171 83 67 96 153

a. Merriment, sport — 74 60 165 127 119

b. Derivative substance, chemically — 64 181 66 82 146

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's Deluxe Unabridged Dictionary*, Second Edition.

Solution to last issue's Trans-O-Gram. SEN. WADSWORTH: *Against Social Security*: "The bill opens the door and invites the entrance into the political field of a power so vast, so powerful as to threaten the integrity of our institutions and to pull the pillars of the temple down upon the heads of our descendants."

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ON THE RIGHT / Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

Tax Morass

NEW YORK, JULY 8

The displays we are given of contending tax-reduction schedules remind us of the hopelessness of current approaches to orderly tax thought. We have now "the House version," "the Senate version," and "the President's version." Concerning the scramble, a few observations:

1. We are a million light years away from the beautiful paradigm of Kemp–Roth. That was, very simply, a tax cut: 5 per cent—for everybody, Bill Gates included—in Year One, 10 per cent in Years Two and Three. Those tax cuts were followed not by decreased federal revenues, but by increased revenues. The result was the semi-legitimizing national experience with supply-side economics. Critics denounce supply-side, pointing to the increase in the national deficit during those years, but they tend to do so without taking into account rises in federal expenditures that, so to speak, broke the bank. None of the projected plans reduces the rate of just plain income taxes.

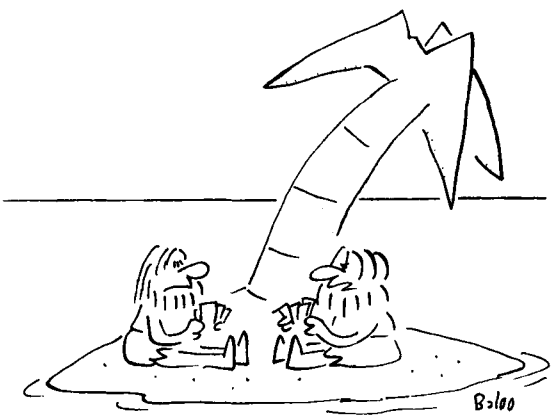
2. The complexity of the measures is dismaying to advocates of simple down-the-line taxation, of the kind Steve Forbes and Dick Armey have struggled, apparently without success, to popularize. One feature in most of the plans is the dogged pursuit of the high-income earner. Every one of the schedules endorses progressivity in some form or another. Child credit? Well, yes, but the House plan eliminates the credit for singles making more than $75,000. The same sort of thing in the President's plan. In capital gains, the House would exempt from taxation the first $250,000. No relief after that, not even for the widow selling her house. The President would reduce capital-gains taxes to 19.6 per cent—unless the person was taxed on more than $263,750, in which case the current tax of 28 per cent is cut down thunderingly to 27.7 per cent, the White House version of tips. And so it goes, the same kind of thing with estate taxes and with IRAs.

The Republicans continue to suffer from their failure to hitch their star to equality of treatment. The moment one plays with the idea that those who earn more should pay, not "more taxes"—they should and they do—but a higher percentage of their income in taxes, you encourage the kind of improvisation that politicians find impossible to resist. If you want to play games of that kind, here is one fancy taken from Andrew Hacker's book *Money*. Try confiscating all income above $100,000. Distribute the proceeds to the poorest 20 per cent. Result? You raise the average income of the poor from $7,764 to $22,219. If you have difficulty understanding what's wrong with that, press HELP.

3. We learn that 68,000 Americans earn a million dollars or more every year. These are predominantly CEO types? Actually, the money-fever of the last decade has done piquant things to the stereotype of modest, humble Bob Cratchit and Big Bossman Scrooge. In the million-dollar-per-year class there are 600 chief executives. And 246 professional football players and 241 baseball players. What we need is a business school that will take top athletes, teach them how to run companies, double their income, and then maybe tax all of it over $100,000. Income levels are not easy to fix by code. When I was in college, the by-laws (of Yale) specified that no coach could be paid more than the president—who was paid $15,000 per year (multiply by six for today's equivalent). The football coach at Florida State today gets paid $975,000.

4. It is a proper concern of society to deplore the relative stability of earnings by the poor and the lower middle class, which have not substantially risen since the early Seventies. But the answer is not more redistribution, which is what the current proposals mostly engage in. In 1970, 15 per cent of American children lived with a single parent. That figure is now 31 per cent. If it had remained at the lower figure, poverty would have been substantially ended.

What might the Republicans do? They should, just to begin with, reach out for philosophical integrity and refuse to consider any plan that distinguishes between income levels. What do we care—really—if 68,000 millionaires get $500 tax credits for their children? In the first place, they aren't "getting" anything from the government, it's their money. In the second place, we are talking about peanuts. In the third place, it is badly needed that we restore perspective on the tax scene, and the infinite individuations attempted by the current proposals serve only to mystify, and blurred vision is the enemy of responsible self-government. □



"Hey! Somebody took a bite out of the three of diamonds!"

Innocents Abroad

NEW YORK, JULY 11

The project was sponsored by an institute at Brown University and paid for by the Rockefeller Foundation. What a terrific idea! Get a dozen North Vietnamese generals, politicians, intellectuals, seat them across the table from American generals, politicians, intellectuals, and jaw away at the events of 1965–1975. Better jaw jaw than war war! Robert McNamara, commander-in-chief of the Flagellant Order of Vietnam, led off by saying: Look, here we have a wonderful opportunity to review the reasons for the Vietnam War, the reasons why negotiations didn't work, and, by doing so, to nurture the wisdom necessary to prevent another such war in the twenty-first century.

There was this problem. The North Vietnamese refused to admit they had done anything wrong. They refused to divulge any substantial information not already known worldwide. They were offended at any suggestion that the North Vietnamese were less sensitive to the loss of human life than the Americans. "At 81," wrote Randall Richard of the *Providence Journal-Bulletin*, one of the two reporters permitted on the scene, "the former U.S. Secretary of Defense moved about the room like a man who still needed to be in control, answering important phone calls, shuffling papers and agendas, and consulting with ambassadors and generals and spies." He was as ineffective a seminar leader as he had been a secretary of defense.

The American delegation had a few questions an answer to which would have been interesting. Why oh why

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didn't the North Vietnamese respond to overtures for negotiation?

Answer: We didn't like it that you didn't initiate those overtures directly, always using intermediaries, like Canada and Switzerland.

Well why did you not let that information out? That you would have been willing to negotiate if we had taken the lead directly?

Answer: We have our secrets. Some of what happened we do not know the reason for its having happened. And if we did, we wouldn't tell you. Besides, we declined to respond to negotiations while you were simultaneously raining bombs down on us.

But there were eight bombing pauses! One of them lasted forty days! Why did you not take any of those opportunities to meet us at the negotiating table?

. . . The sessions remind us of the endless meetings between Secretary Kissinger and General Giap in Paris in 1972. General Giap was himself there at this weekend retreat in Hanoi, a brooding omnipresence. Admit nothing. Repeat everything. Demand everything.

What were the North Vietnamese here demanding? They had got everything else —monolithic control over the South, national independence, a Communist regime and Communist practices, however leavened with the salt of capitalism, as in China. All that they want is total historical rectification. I.e., they wish history to record that what the Vietnamese did during those ten years was heroic, admirable, and justified.

The *Orange County Register*'s dispatch from Vietnam on July 6 opened: "It was the war America lost. The war in which more than 8 million Americans served; 303,678 were wounded and 58,168 died. It also was a war that killed 3.6 million Vietnamese." It is fair to add to the figure 2 million South Vietnamese refugees after the North took over.

The ever-elusive question is, of course: What might have been done to win the war? And, beginning at the other end, Was the strategic objective worth any effort, let alone a gargantuan effort?

We learned that 300,000 Chinese troops were engaged in this "civil war." That Peking encouraged the North Vietnamese to continue the struggle on the straightforward grounds that the dissipation of U.S. strength on that theater diminished our reservoir of strength on other fronts.

But we learned, too, that although the Vietnamese fighters were substantially driven by the prospect of national union and independence, the strategic questions were not misread in Washington: The leadership in the struggle was a cadre of committed Communists. The American defeat of 1975 was followed 15 years later by the defeat of the Communist superpower half a world away. Vietnam endures as a totalitarian nation with the spirit to show contempt for such as McNamara, so anxious to strut his abjection on the world stage. The ongoing casualty of his performance is the cause for which Americans died. □

Internet: The Lost Fight

NEW YORK, JULY 4

The Supreme Court decision on the Internet and pornography is analytically infuriating. Justice John Paul Stevens used as the principal argument for the majority opinion invalidating the congressional act the assertion that the Internet is going to do more good than harm. He went so far in this line of argument as to say that such harm as it does is unmeasured and perhaps impalpable—the old argument: Who ever got hurt by pornography? But to argue that more good than harm can come from the Internet is on the order of saying that more good than harm can come from drugs and therefore commerce in prussic acid should not be forbidden.

My own judgment of the Internet is that it is the most exciting technological research and information tool of the century, but this has nothing at all to do with the challenge of ensuring that only adults would have access to its darker corners. If Mr. Justice Stevens had said simply that there probably isn't any way to keep porn off teenage screens, he'd have been persuasive—letting the case rest on that utilitarian point. We know it wasn't possible to keep liquor outside national boundaries, and every day we learn what are the sacrifices necessary to make it hard for subintelligent people to buy marijuana—moderately resourceful people have no problem.

But of course the Court had to accost the legal question, Was the Communications Decency Act constitutional? Ever since its passage in early 1996 it was expected that the Act would be shot down quickly by the courts, as indeed it was, first by the D.C. Court of Appeals, now by the Supreme Court. But the question is left open: Is this a matter of defective constitutional architecture, or do we have a circle-squaring problem? Is it simply impossible? "I don't think some members of Congress have ever read the Constitution," said Rep. Anna Eshoo of California. Her insight is interesting. But it invites the comment that if the Founding Fathers had lived in an age of Internet, they might have reworded the First Amendment.

The utilitarian argument is the one to take on, and it isn't easy. There are devices for the Internet similar to those being attempted to bar porn from television screens. One system would block twenty thousand websites, another would authorize only three thousand, and both would require weekly adjustments to compensate for the ingenuity of young porn-seekers. "Right now," comments Mariam Bell, the vice president of Enough Is Enough, an anti-pornography group, "it's like a defective condom." One might add as relevant here that any 13-year-old can go to any magazine stand or bookstore and pull up anything (I am assuming) that the Internet can give him. The public has the satisfaction of vague laws that classify movies and push television pornography up from kiddie-time to 8 P.M., mildly inconveniencing 10-year-olds. But the local VHS store makes available stuff that would have soothed the Marquis de Sade. The public will to protest the crowning of King Porn ended when the Supreme Court's decision to okay *Deep Throat* went substantially unprotested.

David Kalish of the Associated Press suggests the frustration of parents who have experienced the technical problem of diverting unwanted material. "Type in the word 'toy' on the popular AltaVista site-search engine and the second choice that blinks up isn't GI Joe or Barbie. It's the Nice N Naughty Adult Toy Store, hawking the Felicia Fantasy Doll, the Testicular Stimulator, and the Precision Power Pump."

Sex is a powerful stimulant to the curiosity and to the masturbatory human inclination. The *Washington Post*'s Rajiv Chandrasekaran and Elizabeth Corcoran write nicely on the evolution of the Internet. The fable of the sorcerer's apprentice comes to mind. But here Justice Stevens correctly remarks, however irrelevantly, that more good is going to come from the Internet than non-good. If the printing press hadn't evolved, *Mein Kampf* would have had to be hand-copied, but so too Shakespeare. The *Post*'s story notes, "When Defense Department researchers wired together a set of university computers 31 years ago, creating a communications network that became today's global Internet, the goal was not to make something that could deliver photos from a service called . . ."—but I'll put it in Pig Latin: to discourage the kids—Iancabay's Mutsay Hacksay.

Parents who care will of course encourage and patronize the blocking devices. But in the back of their minds they will know that this fight, on this front, is lost. □

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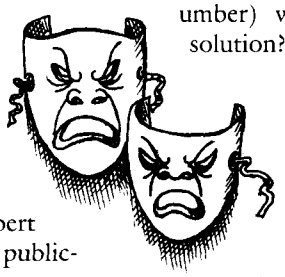
THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER

FLORENCE KING

IN AN effort to prove that Americans have an innate reverence for the arts, Hillary Clinton recently told the story of Dolley Madison's priorities on the night the British burned the White House in 1814. Did the fashionable Dolley think to save her wardrobe, including all those *Empire* turbans? No, indeed. She saved Gilbert Stuart's portrait of George Washington.

Therefore, implied Mrs. Clinton, the National Endowment for the Arts is, and of right ought to be, first in the hearts of her countrypersons.

Never mind the logic. I'm tired of uncoiling the serpentine corkscrews of the Clintonian mind. Besides, the interesting subject here is art per se. If we look at the Gilbert Stuart portrait of Washington in the light of recent art controversies, we can see just how awful democracy is.



Framed prints of the Gilbert Stuart portrait hung in every public-school classroom once, leading generations of children to suppose it was a picture of Washington in Heaven because of the white clouds at the bottom. The clouds are the unfinished part; according to one story, Stuart was so awed by his subject that he remained unsatisfied with the work and left it incomplete.

Think of it. A portrait of a white male, by a white male, who left a white hole. Empty canvas going to waste when so many people have never been done in oils. Since there's still some room left in it, why not fill it up? Stick something in there—an Aztec priest performing open-heart surgery, a lesbian hooked up to a dialysis machine, Marion Barry hooked—something, anything. It doesn't matter what, as long as it celebrates our Great Diversity and atones for the Great Unpainted.

Sound insane? It shouldn't—it's precisely the approach to art that We the Connoisseurs tolerate without a peep. Take the "Three Suffragettes" statue that languished in the Capitol cellar for so many years. It shows Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton in what appears to be a box seat at a baseball game. It was kept under wraps because it did not "fit," artistically speaking, in the Rotunda, but since when has asymmetry ever bothered feminists? The NOW cows wanted that statue out front where everybody could see it, by God, and never mind sissy stuff like balance and proportion.

They were on the verge of victory when suddenly Rep. Cynthia McKinney and other hob-nailed aesthetes of the #3 sepia persuasion objected to the work because Sojourner Truth (#6 burnt umber) was missing from it. The solution? It got to be inclusive! Whittle a statue of Sojourner Truth and put her in. Where? Don't make no nevermind, just so she in it. But what about the artistic prerogative of the original sculptress? Don't make no nevermind—she white. Well, then, since we're wrecking creative intent, would you prefer Ms. Truth to be whittled in black marble in contrast to the white marble of the rest of the work? Ooooeeee! That be cool! You tellin' it now, sista!

Artistic prerogative and creative intent are no longer sacrosanct, even when inspired by political correctness. Sculptor Lawrence Halprin scrupulously included Braille panels in the FDR Memorial, only to come under fire from blind tourists who complained that the panels were too big to read with fingertips and that some were eight feet off the ground. A Halprin assistant explained the aesthetic reason—the panels must be big enough to be appreciated at a distance and draw the viewer (whoops!) in—but it did no good because what was once called "perspective" is now called discrimination. There is only one way to satisfy the blind-fury crowd. Chop those panels off the top and put 'em on the bottom where people can reach 'em, and make the big dots little dots, you dumb bastard, or we'll tie you to your cement and throw you in the Potomac.

IT IS significant that the general public expressed no surprise on learning that giant Braille panels had been included in the memorial. That's because We the Connoisseurs of the United States, being in huddled masses assembled, were no longer capable of being surprised by anything to do with the FDR Memorial. The artistic despotism and aesthetic usurpations committed by both sides in the controversy had already rendered us numb. A decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that I declare the causes which impel me to say this, and so let Facts be submitted to a candid World:

They threatened to tie up traffic with piles of wheelchairs.

They compromised on the wheelchair by putting casters on FDR's regular chair, then gave him a cape as rigid as a piece of sheet metal to hide the casters from all but the most vigilant paranoids, who are now flocking to the memorial to see the casters as tourists once flocked to the Erechtheion to see the fragile marble drapery falling in soft folds from the bosoms of the Karyatids.

They modeled statues on portraits painted from life, then removed the cigarette holder, leaving FDR with two stiff fingers holding nothing.

They took away Eleanor Roosevelt's fox fur piece to prevent animal-rights protestors from dynamiting the site, an everpresent danger that evidently unsteadied the hand of her Praxiteles because she looks exactly like Bess Truman.

They have sized and placed statuary to encourage "interaction," creating what amounts to a petting farm that sooner or later will attract bronze fetishists who will try to hump something.

They have included so many "rooms" and so many pools, including a waterfall, that the site is a humid maze, making it an ideal bathhouse for the homeless, who can escape detection merely by freezing in place and pretending to be one of the statues of the Depression homeless. Who but the bronze fetishists would know the difference?

We can predict where this is headed. *Tableaux vivants*, once the pastime of Victorian maidens, will be revived. The homeless will be assigned to the memorial as salaried "living statuary," and the Clintons will call it art. □

Miss King is the author of The Florence King Reader *and other books.*

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Heinz Niedermaier, VP Hotel Operations (right) and Juanito Olor, Sous Chef – Royal Caribbean International

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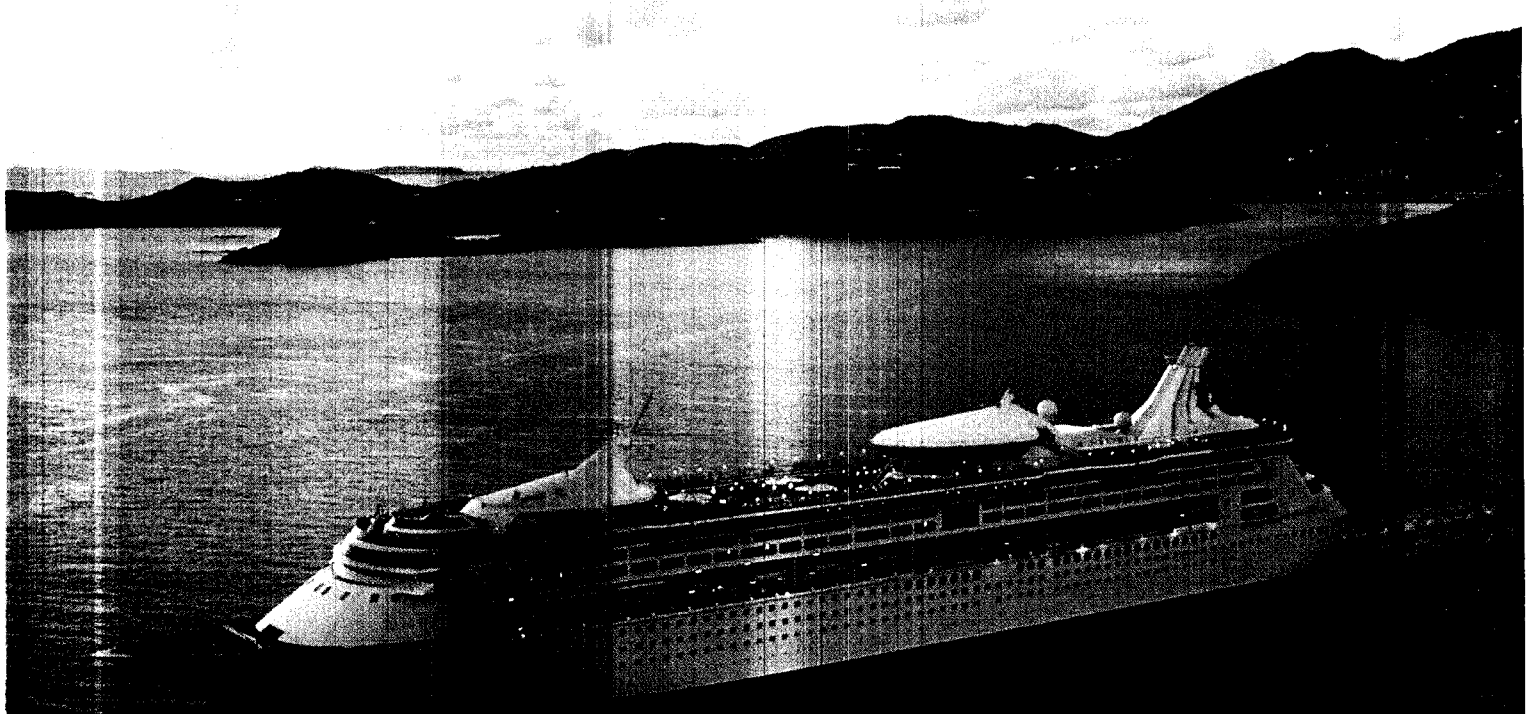

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